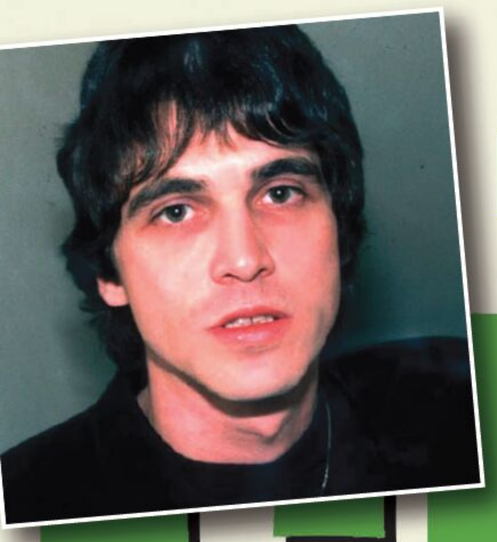

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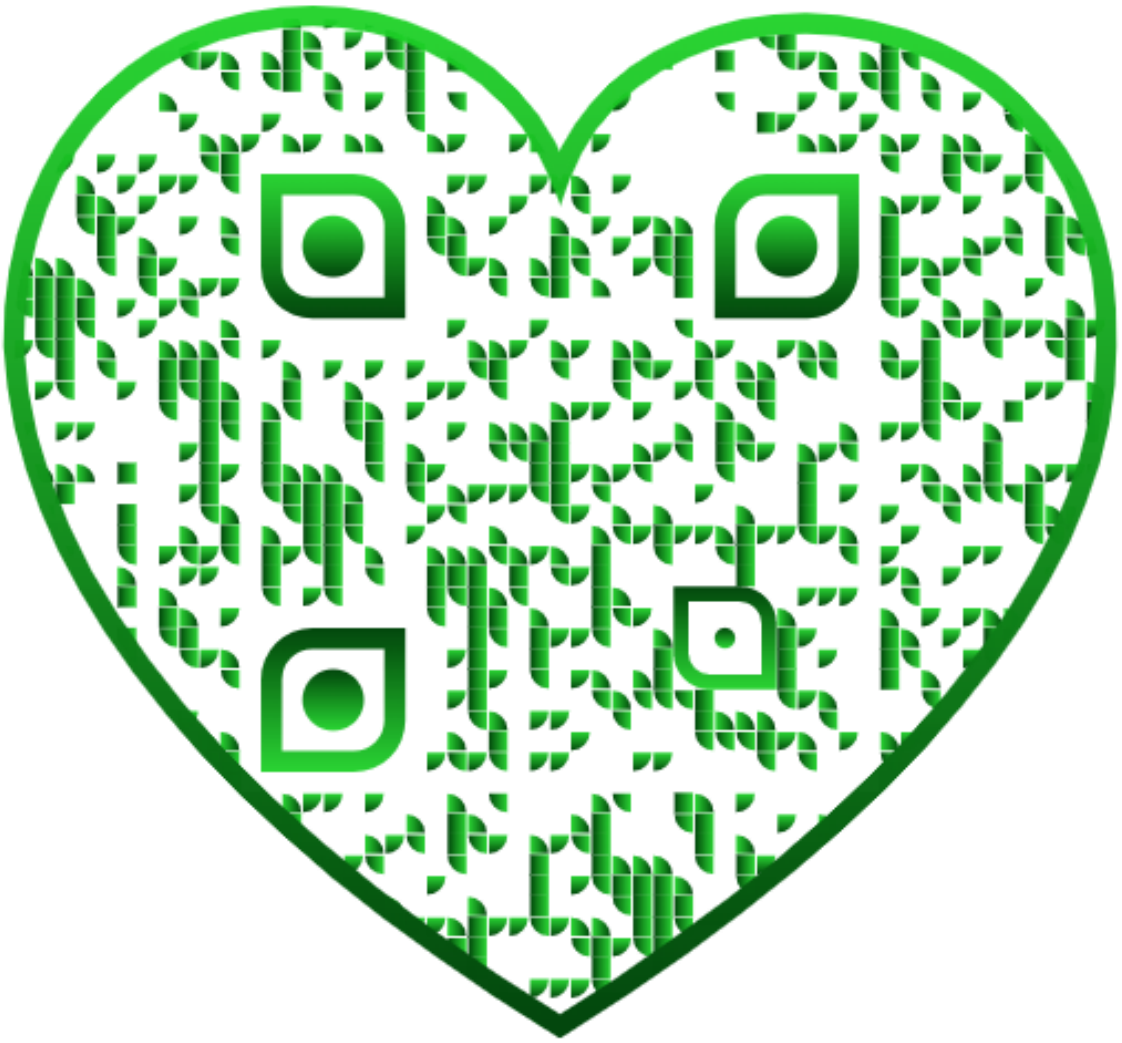

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"It was Phil who pulled me into a secluded hallway and said, 'Dwight, let's make a hit record right now'. That night we recorded 'I'm on Fire'"

welcome

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Happy New Year,

I hope you had a good Christmas and are now ready for a year of fantastic music, reading, listening and watching.

We put this issue together in record time to meet the printer's festive deadline. And we managed it. Having some time off was a bonus.

The end of last year saw us work around a couple of themes, but this month we serve up a good old mix. Ahead of an exciting Arthur Lee and Love project, due for release in the summer on High Moon, we bring you an intriguing piece on Arthur's '70s versions of Love – we even got to talk with Joe Blocker, the drummer on the sadly maligned *Reel To Real*. It's a great read. Then there's Brighton indie/psych mavens 14 Iced Bears, celebrated jazz and library music voice Barbara Moore, the almost-legendary Wil Malone, and the sadly missed powerpop icon Dwight Twilley, along with the shining light in contemporary music production Jonathan Rado. We even squeeze in The Beatles, oh, and my old band The Nuthins too. Not bad for two weeks work. And as usual, there's a whole lot more.

This year marks both our 30th year and 150th issue, so celebrations and special content are guaranteed. *Shindig!* readers really do feel like friends now, and there's quite a few of you who have been with us from the very start, including writers. It's been quite a journey. Over that time, we've spread our wings and embraced different forms of music, but it all feels like a natural progression. Nothing's too jarring or desperate. If you are obsessed with brilliant music, you naturally absorb more.

If you haven't subscribed yet, what are you waiting for?

See you next month,

Jon 'Mojo' Mills,
Editor-In-Chief

Shindig! recommend using the hi-fi gear of their media partners and sponsors. Left to right: Pro-Ject X2 turntable (bit.ly/3FzsvhV), Cambridge Audio EVO 150 (bit.ly/3qEUusx), EVO CD (bit.ly/462l6mz), and JBL L82s (bit.ly/3X7m3XA). This is a supreme hassle-free system for vinyl, CD, high-res streaming. We will be working very closely with Cambridge Audio moving forward, so watch this space. We use Chord cables (bit.ly/3sbhbp7)

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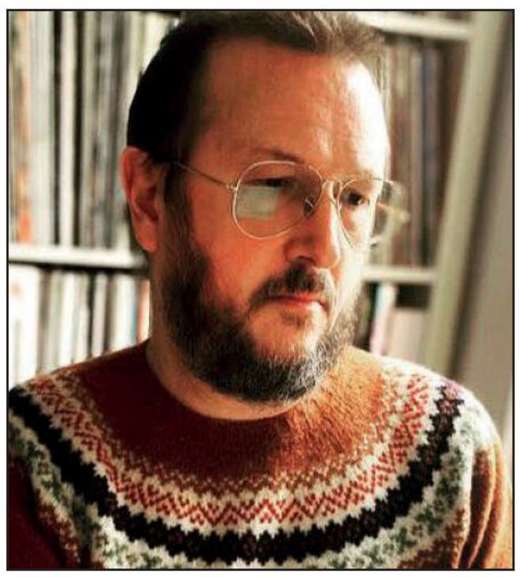

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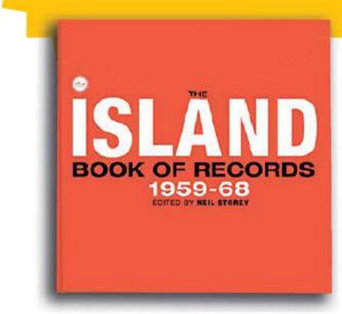
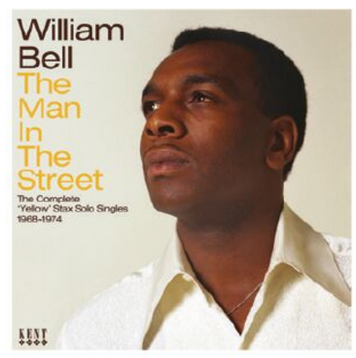
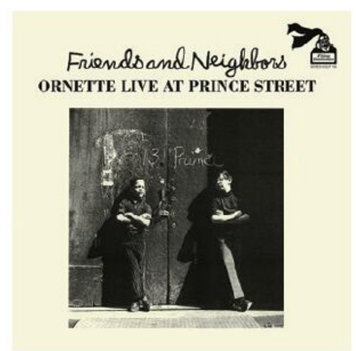
The Island Book Of Records 1959-68, one of our writers' favourite books of 2023

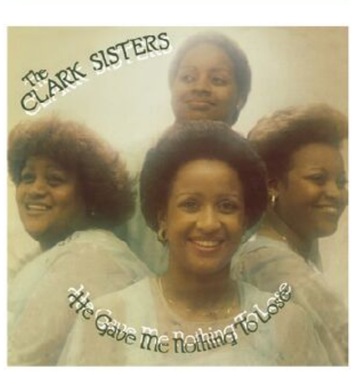


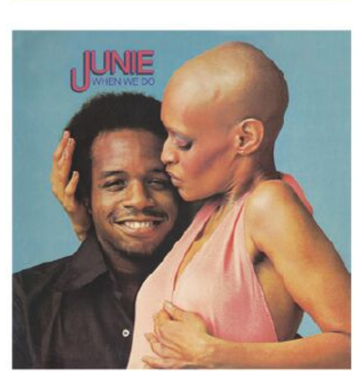
Garage fan? An anthology of all the recordings our own Jon 'Mojo' Mills made with The Nuthins in the '90s is released on Detour. Head to bit.ly/46QhB2M to order, adding "from *Shindig!*"

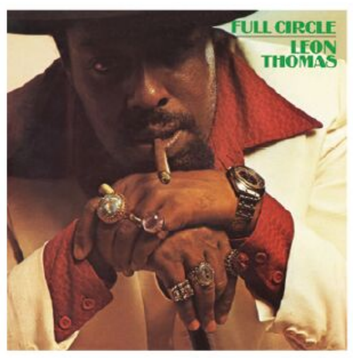
Ace best of 2023

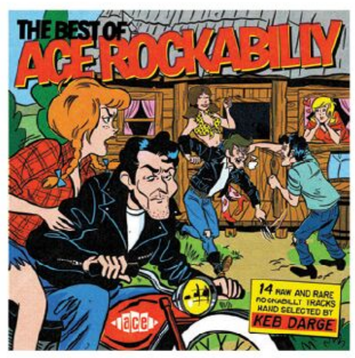


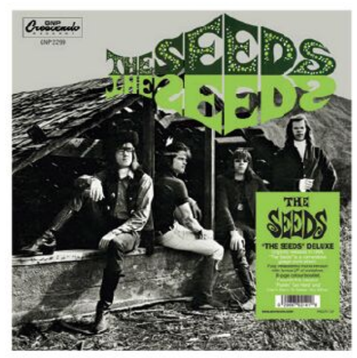


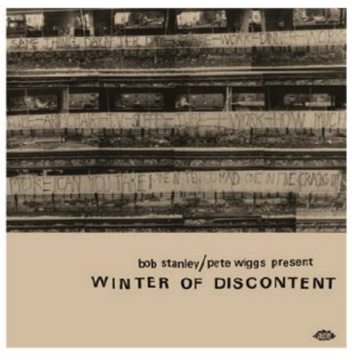












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STAR LETTER

MAKING WAVES

Dear Jon, and especially Sarah,

For this reader, who throughout his life felt attracted by all things countercultural, it was very special indeed being treated to LA's '60s Freak Out Hot Spots. Sarah, you've proved to be a very reliable time-travelling guide. More guide work like this! And, Jon, it's not for the first time I have noted that *Shindig!*'s female staff know how to add a further layer of distinction to an already remarkable magazine!

Let me turn to Frank Zappa and his band of "Mothers" at the time and add a footnote, which I have to admit would have been difficult to fit in Sara's feature. Given that Frank never stopped surprising people, it may not seem such an outlying idea that he did model a little bit. Presumingly, he did not hesitate too long as the person behind the lens turned out to be photography artist Richard Avedon. And we can sure imagine Frank's eyes popping out on seeing his modelling partner was a certain Claudia Cardinale! Boy, what a lucky fellow, our Frank – and did he have to ask Gail before? For proof, I am attaching the pics as they appeared in '67, first in Italy's popular mainstream *Epoca* mag, then slightly later in US men's mag *Cavalier*, and finally it was the Scandinavian mags turn, first Finland then Sweden (I did my homework, see?).

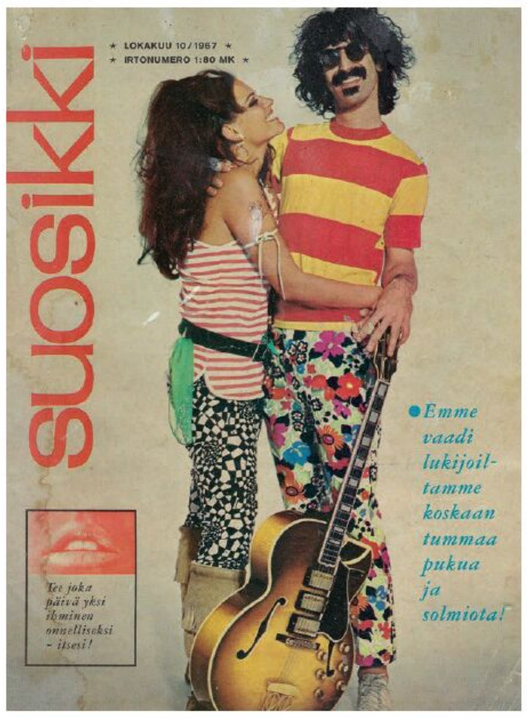
But why was CC around at all? Between '64 and '67 she had been starring in a couple of Hollywood productions. The Richard Avedon shots with Claudia and Frank sort of link to her starring in the '67 Alexander Mackendrick movie *Don't Make Waves*. Promoted as a sex comedy then, at the distance of almost 60 years, The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in 2023 sells it as a "piercing satire of the American Dream" [moma.org.calendar/events/8483] – the same statement could also be made about the Richard Avedon photo series, easily to be imagined the perfect trailer to the movie. So Claudia Cardinale due to her work on this film was already physically very close to the LA Freak Scene and seemed to be very sympathetic.

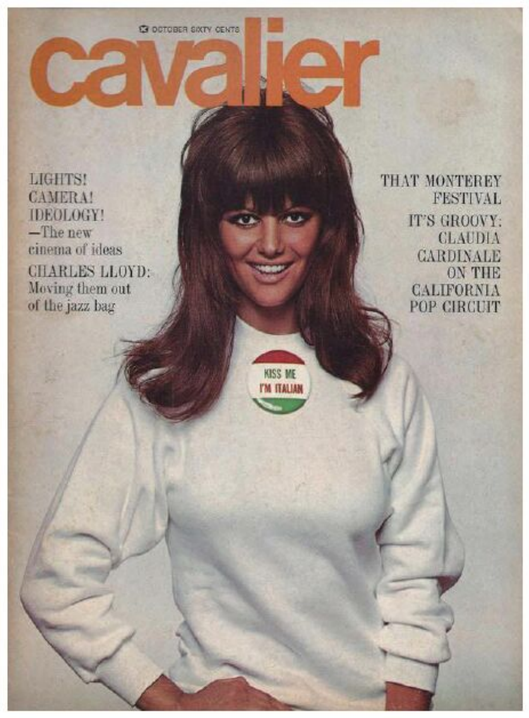
Only one suggestion for further articles, how about a regular section dedicated to session men? My first spontaneous candidates would be Shawn Phillips, early sitar player on Donovan records, or Jesse Ed Davis, guitar work with Taj Mahal, George Harrison, Eric Clapton – why not ask readers for further session names to drop to pay homage. I am done.

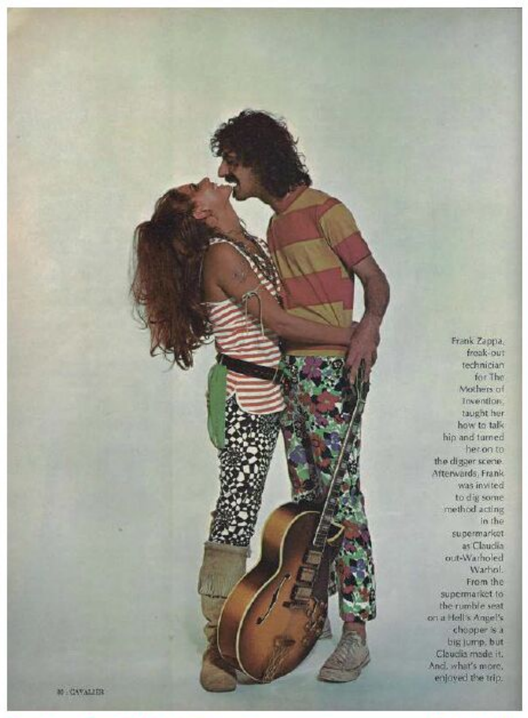
Regards,

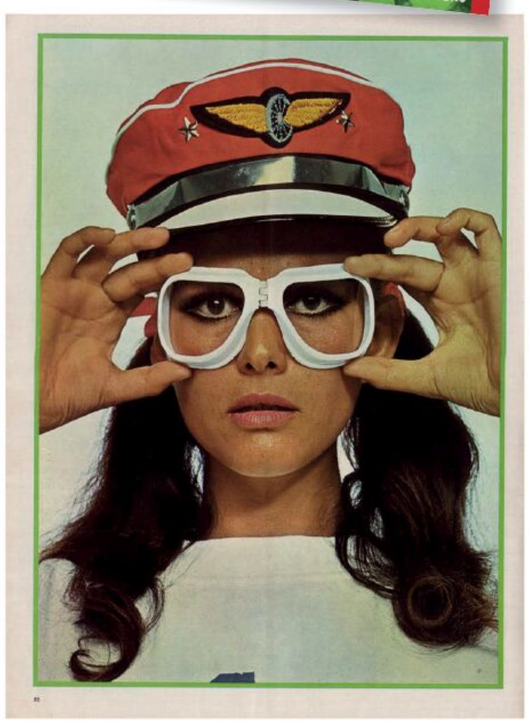
Horst Eilers

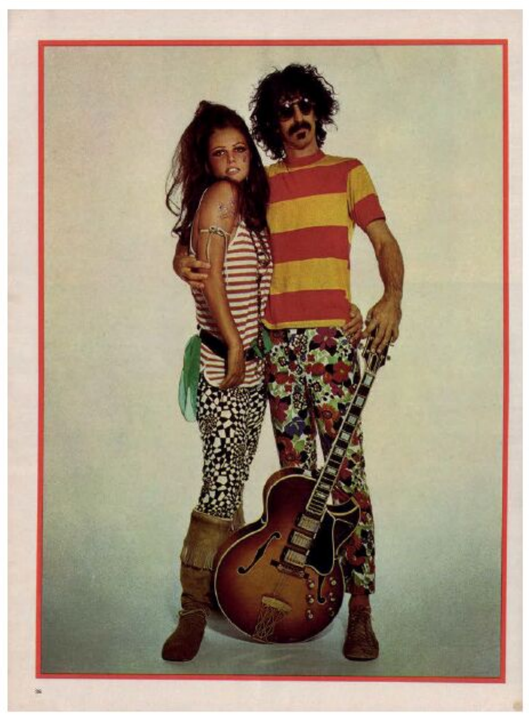
What a fantastic addition. We're sending you Strawberry's Pushin' Too Hard: American Garage Punk 1964-1967 *as a "thank you", Horst. Enjoy.*

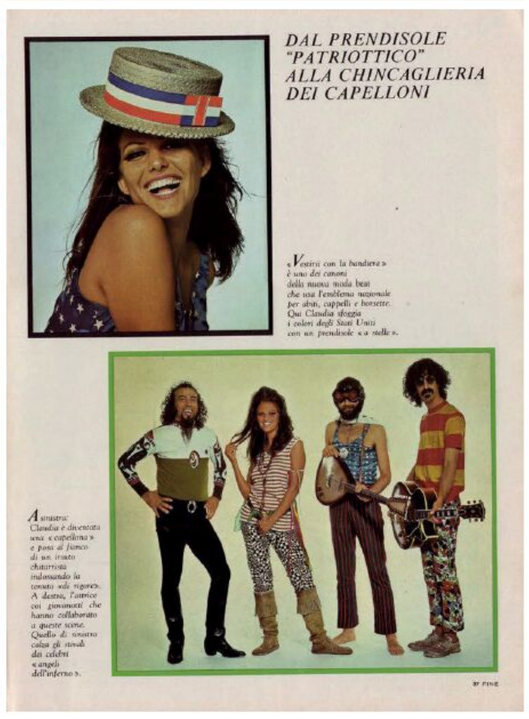












The Fairies, decidedly mean and moody in 1965

GET YOURSELF HOME

Hi Jon,

I've been reading the article about The Fairies... and, as most of us know, Twink's Pretty Things and Pink Fairies escapades have been well-documented in the past, but his early adventures have, up to now, not been.

At the end of the piece, the whereabouts of most of the guys he played with was revealed, but no mention of John 'Akky' Acutt... so, to enlighten those interested, he has lived in Enfield for years, and about 15 years ago, he and I were playing together at a jam night at The Wheatsheaf pub in Baker Street. We were tearing the arse out of a bluesy 12-bar, and he was playing a mean slide guitar. He sold that Gretsch for a pittance, many years ago.

Bye for now,

Bob Sawyer

It's always good to hear from you Bob, and nice to read about Akky. The Fairies were wyld.

SIXTY YEARS OF MOD

Hi Jon,

I've just taken out a subscription again after missing your mag for a few months.I really enjoyed your You Can't Sit Down thing on the 1984 mods and thought it would be good to update it to mod of today.

Many of the faces back then are still involved to this day, i.e Rob Bailey, Lee Miller, Dave Edwards, Paul Anderson etc etc. I think it would be a decent read.

Keep up the great work,

Ian Eberlein

We'll be taking with Rob Bailey about his 60 Years Of Mod event in the next issue.

REFLECTION SONGS

Hi Jon,

Many thanks for the feature on Locomotive, which was excellent and just what I subscribe to *Shindig!* for.

Also, good to see that there's a Donovan reissue schedule. He's been badly neglected for the last 20 years or so, since *Beat Cafe*, but had his finger on the pulse in the late '60s and it is great that he is being rediscovered.

Keep up the great work.

Kind regards!

Mike Clarke

Hi Jon,

After reading the lovely article on Donovan #146, I listened to *Fairytale* and was amazed at the wonderful music and the strength of the songwriting. I first saw him at a very intimate gig in an old Victorian house in North London in 1964, what a great artist he is.

Terrific mag, and always something interesting to read.

David M Stanton

Mike and David, I'm glad you appreciated the Donovan interview. He was exactly as you would hope.

Thanks to all of you who've offered feedback on our 2023 Writers' Poll. It's always fascinating to see how our readers' nominations tally with ours. Or don't.

We'd also like to make an apology. A gremlin at the production stage meant that the last three entries in our Best New Album winners list got nudged off the bottom of the page. Here they are, and congratulations to all three!

28. SAM BLASUCCI – Off My Stars (INNOVATIVE LEISURE)

29. EDGAR JONES – Reflections Of A Soul Dimension (STEREOPAR)

30. THOSE PRETTY WRONGS – Holiday Camp (CURATION)

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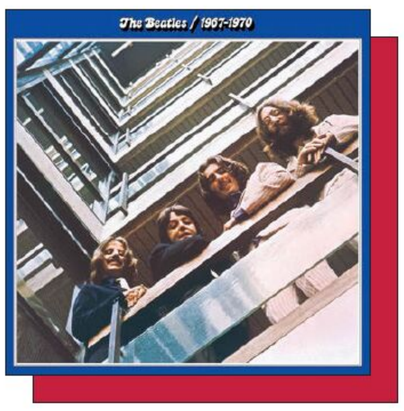
shindiggin'

What's HOT on the Shindig! turntable

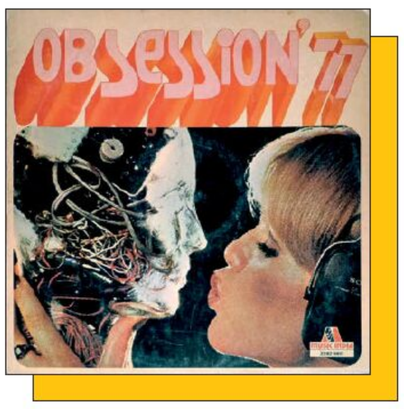
The brand new releases, compilation standouts, old album tracks and dusty 45s rockin' our world this month



THE BEATLES
I Am The Walrus

The Beatles and George Martin were all about technology and using all of the latest gadgets. They cut 'I Am The Walrus' across four days in September 1967. Three years earlier they could've smashed out an album out in that time, but this was different. So, that Martin Jr has really gone to town on the 2023 Atmos version, is something to celebrate. You love this song, you have to hear this, whatever it takes. Forget the stereo remix argument, just listen to it in Atmos. At the two-minute mark you will be touched forever.

Available on: The Beatles 1967-1970 (APPLE MUSIC/UME)



ATOMIC FOREST
Obsession '77

Following the lead of intrepid explorers Pleasurewood and their deep dives into Indian psychedelic rock, we've been inspired to dust off this mind-bending five minutes that comes close to answering the pressing question, what would it sound like if Fela Kuti and Jefferson Airplane were asked to make a disco record? Be thankful for the few compilers that have championed this cut because an original pressing of the LP on which it first appeared now commands some *seriously* hefty dough, and is long overdue a full, all-the-trimmings repress.

Available on: Obsession '77 (MUSIC INDIA LP)

THE KAISERS
Shaking & Stomping

A taster from their upcoming *More From...* LP, here's the latest 45 by The Kaisers, veterans of the pre-1966 beat revival who've now been together in some shape or form for three decades plus. 'Shaking & Stomping' sees a real return to form with the beat blasting forth from the speakers with a high degree of vim and vigour. The production is on the money too, providing just the right amount of treble, bass, boom and twang to gear you up for your next living room soirée. More twangs and rumbles are also found on the macabre sounding, but fun-filled flip 'Guillotine Twist'.

Available on: SLEAZY 45

ALMOST BAD NEWS FEATURING DEN DENNIS
Axogram

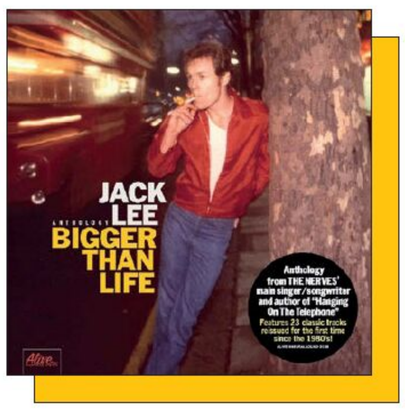
It's been 35 years since we last heard from heavy-metal titans Bad News, but now their guitarist, elder statesman of rock Den Dennis, is back with a hard partying new single 'Axogram', the moving tale of a half bike, half axe, half man, all set to the widdliest guitar solos this side of the NWOBHM, replete with thumping drums and demonic laughs aplenty. Of course, some of you may say that this is actually *Young Ones/Comic Strip*/Nicholas Craig legend Nigel Planer in disguise, but we couldn't possibly comment.

Available on: FRILLY PINK 45

THE AMAZING
When The Colours Change

There's something about darker months in the northern hemisphere that makes certain songs hit home. This closing cut from The Amazing's 2011 album is particularly affecting. Folk, jazz, and rock collide in spectacular form. Dreamy floating piano, meditative strings, and Reine Fiske's sumptuous guitar lines provide the backing for Christoffer Gunrup's icy vocals, which sit on top like mist over a fjord. And then there's Moussa Fadera's drumming gently driving the whole thing along. Worth an immersive listen if only for those subtle fills. It's said that Swedes are averse to spontaneity and don't like to improvise. Not so here.

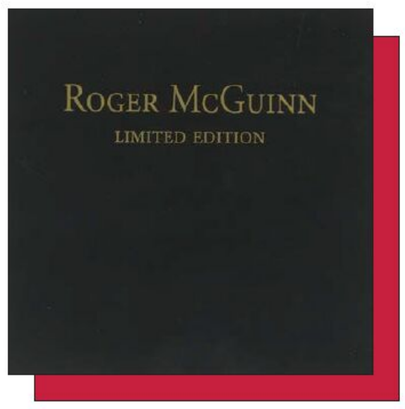
Available on: Gentle Stream (SUBLIMINAL SOUNDS LP)



JACK LEE
Come Back And Stay

May 2023 saw the passing of Jack Lee, best known as guitarist with short-lived LA-based powerpop trio The Nerves and for penning Blondie's 1978 UK Top 5 hit 'Hanging On The Telephone'. His most successful song, however, was 'Come Back And Stay', a '83 chart-topper in several countries for a certain blue-eyed soul boy, and a big British and American hit. Lee's '81 original is well worth seeking out; it is a thing of raw, driving beauty and, incredible as it may seem, even spikier than Paul Young's mullet.

Available on: Bigger Than Life – A Jack Lee Anthology (ALIVE CD)



ROGER MCGUINN
May The Road Rise To Meet You

The Byrds were no strangers to blending genres but who knew Roger McGuinn's quiet claim to have invented a new genre, Pho-Kop, a mixture of folk and hip-hop? His version of 'Shady Grove' is actually more in keeping with the likes of Beck and is one of many late career highlights on a rare 2004 CD that popped out on the back of his Folk Den series. The best track though is this rather affecting Byrdsy sounding track, co-written with wife Camilla, that could easily have been at home on 1969's *The Ballad Of Easy Rider* album.

Available on: Limited Edition (APRIL FIRST CD)

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH
Dark Star

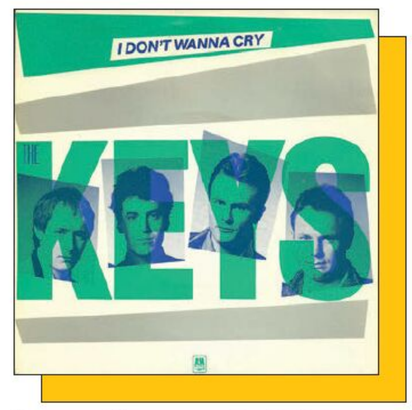
When Crosby, Stills & Nash released *CSN* in 1977, it was their first new music in seven years. And while the album bore two singles, it's Balearic classic 'Dark Star' that really stands as a cut above. A Stephen Stills-penned ditty – allegedly about his flagging marriage – the song is cushioned in percussive Latin rhythms, acoustic guitar and some glorious organ-playing, all accompanied by the trio's customary, exuberant harmonies. Being just an album track, 'Dark Star' could easily slip under the radar, but it has everything you could hope for from a CSN record, and more.

Available On: CSN (ATLANTIC LP)

THE TONY WILLIAMS LIFETIME
Vashkar

Once upon a time there were the classic Blue Note organ trios. That all changed with the arrival of The Tony Williams Lifetime and their colossal debut double album *Emergency!* in 1969. Suddenly what had been cool and stylish was now the raw, frenzied and intense sound of lightning being bottled in the combustible and combative playing styles of Tony Williams, Larry Young and John McLaughlin. Here, on their radical transformation of Carla Bley's 'Vashkar', Lifetime explode into life like a box of firecrackers upping the dynamics and performance levels to stratospheric heights with their trailblazing full-on fusion.

Available on: Emergency! (BE WITH LP)



THE KEYS
I Don't Wanna Cry

How this song, or even this band, managed to slip through the cracks back in 1981 is anyone's guess. The British quartet channelled '60s-tinged songwriting into a tight powerpop framework on their solitary long-player *The Keys Album*. It was trailed by 'I Don't Wanna Cry', a flawless 2:52 that inhabits the same space as The Vapors and Jags but is enlivened by a crisp Joe Jackson production that aligns it closely with his own sharp pop missives of the era. Former Wings man Geoff Britton occupied the drum stool, upping their credentials even further, but six singles missed the charts and a planned second album never happened.

Available on: A&M 45

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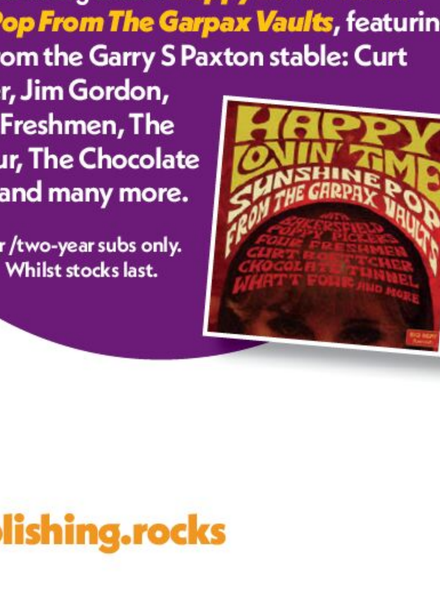
Remember, subscribing to *Shindig!* gains you automatic entry into our subscribers' prize draw every month. Someone always wins a fantastic prize for doing nothing more than signing up for a year, which of course also gets you the magazine delivered to your door each month. That lucky person could be you.



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Like ducks to water. George, Paul, Ringo and John in EMI Studios, Abbey Road, 1963
PHOTO COURTESY OF APPLE

For The Love Of MAL

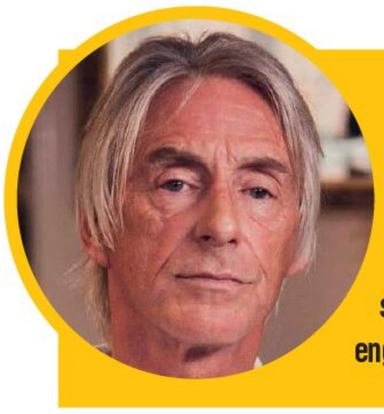
THE BEATLES' expanded *Red* and *Blue* collections landed just in time for Christmas on the back of much publicised "new" single 'Now And Then'. Both have caused some degree of controversy.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS and a cast of musical pals offer thoughts and opinions on the new Machine Assisted Learning mixes, ATMOS and yet more fabs

We've lived in an era of remastering, repackaging and expanded reissues longer than some readers have been alive. We're also living at a time when many young people are just discovering the charms of The Beatles, and indeed The Rolling Stones. Both bands are still relative after all.

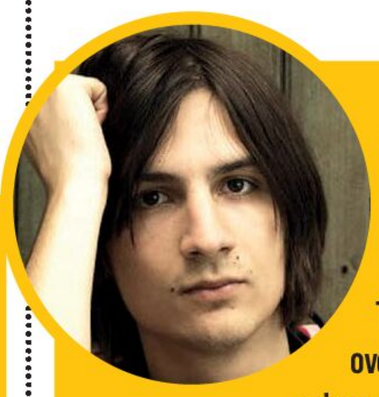
In October 2023, The Rolling Stones issued new album *Hackney Diamonds*. It was both universally loved ("Man, Mick's still got it", "This *sounds* like The Rolling Stones") and derided ("It sounds too *modern* and *clean*", "What's this? The *AI* Rolling Stones?"). Uncannily, a month later a "new" Beatles single followed. Like the Stones' latest effort, it made the news; the release campaign equally widescreen and talked about. Many of us revelled in the fact that the two bands we had grown up with, were everywhere, over 60 years on.

Following the Giles Martin Dolby Atmos mix of *Hackney Diamonds*, this writer bought a pair of Apple AirPod Pro 2s, just so that I could hear it. And I loved it, as well as *Goats Head Soup*. The month after, 'Now And Then' appeared in Atmos, followed by *Red* and *Blue*. Giles Martin had certainly breathed new life into the two poles of pop aristocracy, but was this valid technologically enhanced



Paul Weller (Beatles-loving songsmith): What's possibly wrong with the original mixes? They are some of the greatest bits of engineering and mixing ever.

James Skelly (The Coral): It's lost the energy for me; they feel a bit thin, as well. I do find it an interesting experiment though. I just worry that these will become the definitive mixes for the younger generations.



Brian D'Addario (The Lemon Twigs): For me, the mono and original stereo mixes that The Beatles personally oversaw will always be the primary mixes I listen to. It seems like Giles Martin may be using those as a, sort of, guide. I think the new mixes are mostly tasteful. I enjoy them as companion pieces to the original records, allowing you to notice bits you might not otherwise hear.

Just four years later...
PHOTO COURTESY OF APPLE

WIN!

We have a set of the *Red* and *Blue* albums on coloured vinyl to give away. Simply answer the below question and email to **win@shindig-magazine.com** with "Beatles" in the subject.

Question: Which Beatles song was inspired by a British Rail journey?

art or the reselling of old (diamond encrusted) rope?

For the uninitiated, Atmos is Dolby's latest surround sound technology. It goes beyond the 5.1 and 7.1 experience by adding height channels, allowing sounds to be reinterpreted as three-dimensional objects with neither horizontal or vertical limitations. If you've seen a blockbuster at a multiplex, you'll have witnessed it. Home AV gear can assimilate this too, with a receiver and speakers or a suitable sound bar, and TV streaming companies all now broadcast in Atmos too. Tidal allows Tidal Connect to broadcast to home AV whilst Apple only works with Atmos on its HomePod or equipped headphones and buds. Yes, it's a minefield. And quite how Atmos, which in a proper set up has floor and roof firing speakers and countless rear and surround ones, can work on a set of AirPods is unbelievable, but it does. This is where the revelation, with firstly 'Now And Then' and then the *Red* and *Blue* albums, came in to play. Prior to this, *Abbey Road*, *Revolver,* and *Sergeant Pepper* have all appeared in Atmos, but it is the new Peter Jackson MAL system, first used on the *Get Back* series, which can do wonders opening up even the most basic recorded tracks. When utilised on the earliest recordings, it gives the most impressive results, adding clarity and scope previously untapped. 'Twist And Shout' sounds full and separate, the band locked in, with the vocals in the middle. It's incredibly effective, and to these ears doesn't sound modern at all. You're positioned in the centre of it all, there. 'Ticket To Ride' is fantastically widescreen and structured. And whilst the *Blue* album's mixes date back to 2015, with the majority having been available before, the 2023 versions here are fantastic. 'I Am The Walrus' gets right inside the third eye, with a dizzying array of mind-mangling elements, barely heard in stereo.

Yes, the well-pressed vinyl packages' stereo mixes sound pleasing, and they do bring something new, yet it is when listening to this historic music in Atmos, that you truly get the sense of what can be achieved. Old rope? Never. Try it.

John Leckie (record producer): They sound fab and are a feast for Beatles addicts to analyse and expand on. We should be grateful that we exist in this universe at a time when we can access Beatles (and Stones) and relish in the excitement of a continual revelation of hidden sounds and clarities from these ancient recordings! Dolby Atmos? Will it catch on? Listening to Atmos is still a "special event" for me, but I don't see it becoming a "domestic" listening practise.

Beatles highlights so far: the clarity and power of Ringo's Ludwig kit. The many varied guitar sounds. The band plays as one unit and get in and out of the song quickly, which makes you want to hear it again. 'Twist And Shout', 'Magical Mystery Tour', 'I Feel Fine', 'Day Tripper'.

Jason Falkner (guitar man with Air, Beck, St Vincent and solo artist): There are always going to be the real purists, which I totally understand. I would consider myself pretty much a purist as well in that regard. But to me, it's just another part of the whole picture. It's like a new addition to the canon, it doesn't change the other thing. I do agree that if that's your way in, it's not the most honest introduction to the band.

Tony Bailey (record collector and reader): The new mixes are generally fabulous for an occasional listen to hear elements perhaps buried in originals. But they are not pleasant (to my ears) for a long listen. I much prefer and return to the original '60s cuts, mono and (yes) stereo. Maybe it is because that is what I am used to? New mixes are perhaps more in keeping with modern tastes and sound, "better" on low-end record players and tiny bluetooth speakers.

Derek See (The Gentle Cycle): Nobody is taking away the original mixes from our collections. The new mixes are wonderful and uncover a whole lot of guitar definition between the parts that were buried in the wall of excitement previously. They also lose the wonky early stereo experimentation that is off-putting to a whole lot of younger (and older folks). The amount of conservative, reactionary gatekeeping is unbelievable. Don't like them? No one is forcing you to listen! Plenty of us find incredible joy in them, and no amount of grumbling is going to take that away.

Live And Let Fly

On debut long-player *They Live*, **PLEASUREWOOD** pool their eclectic tastes and crate-digging tendencies to fashion a tantalising stew of break-heavy psychedelic soul, sleazy Euro soundtrack grooves and retro-futurist library music textures.

Here, they guide us through some of the sounds that fed into its creation

ANTHONY DONJE

RD BURMAN
Title Music
(From *Shalimar*, Polydor, 1978)

The inspiration of Hindi cinema composer Rahul Dev 'Pancham' Burman has loomed very large over my contribution to the Pleasurewood project with my first point of access being the era-defining all-time blockbuster film *Sholay*, the title theme of which Paul and I covered in our earlier band Hot Border Special. His future-forward looking synthesisers and sequencing and co-opting of JB's funk and Miles Davis's early '70s psychedelic jazz is a singular melding. He's a great assimilator and composes with strong themes and textures that can't be found elsewhere. The *Shalimar* opening title features a lot of his trademark handbrake-turn mood shifting and the laying down of a funk break that wouldn't sound out of place on a Lalo Schifrin cue.

KALYANJI-ANANDJI
Dharmatma Theme Pt 1 (Instrumental)
(From *Dharmatma*, HMV, 1975)

The break in this track from the 1975 film *Dharmatma* and the vocal hook was sampled by J Dilla and Madlib (aka Jaylib) on their track 'Champion Sound'. The contrast of fuzz guitar and breakbeat drums and bass with the vocalist intoning in a hypnotic celestial way and what sounds like a Hindustani classical flute (Bansuri) is arresting in a manner that freezes the soul into beautiful glacial ice clouds.

ASHA BHOSLE/RD BURMAN
Dum Maro Dum Pt 1
(From *Haré Rama Haré* Krishna, Odeon, 1971)

It wouldn't be possible for me to put too much RD Burman in my selections for highly inspiring tracks. 'Dum Maro Dum''s bass guitar muted plectrum picking with attendant sub frequencies is a sound we've tried to emulate in our song 'Move.' The blend of raw organic analogue synths and transistor organ also caught the ear for a lot of the tracks on *They Live* to the point where we now jokingly call it "The Pleasurewood Sound" anytime a Farfisa or Vox Continental ends up on one of our tracks.

MICHEL LEGRAND
The Race, First Laps
(From *Le Mans*, Columbia, 1971)

I got into the Steve McQueen film first courtesy of my dad and then the pair of us would obsess over the breakbeat section that occurred at the beginning of the race in the film fast-forwarding and rewinding to listen to it over and over until the VHS tape got knackered and unplayable. I set off to try and buy it on vinyl and 10 years later found it in an obscure record shop when I was on tour with The Heliocentrics in Bremen. Its melodic Hammond-doubled-with-flute, soaring over another classic bass and drums break with neo-classical orchestral string explosions rich in metal percussion parts, can offer markers to what we're doing.

WIL MALONE
Death Line (Main Theme)
(From *Death Line: The Original Motion Picture Soundtrack*, Spinney, 2001, recorded 1972)

I was up late watching this very disturbing low-budget British horror film on the telly one night, set down in the Piccadilly Line with Donald Pleasance investigating murderous zombies mutilating commuters, and the title theme knocked me onto my arse. A detuned modular Moog is the bassline over jazzy brushed drums, insistent percussion-mode Hammond organ and unhinged violins stabbing unsettlingly in unison. I eventually got to work with Wil Malone on a string arrangement for The Noisettes and was full of questions and enthusiasm for this piece of music, but he was very self-deprecating about it and gave the impression that it had to be put together very quickly. Since hearing this piece, the idea of putting a beast-mode Moog in the bass position has really appealed and can be heard on the title track and 'Gramercy Park' from *They Live*.

PAUL ELLIOTT

THE WHITEFIELD BROTHERS
Safari Strut
(From *Earthology*, Now-Again, 2009)

A friend of mine had this album playing in the background one afternoon around the time of its release and I immediately took notice – how could you not, right? This track in particular is one that I always go back to. It has a timeless vibe. It feels like a new record to me even though it's over a decade old. It has that magical quality of grooving really hard but remaining incredibly laidback, hitting this sweet spot between Ethio-jazz and heavy-funk. To be honest, as much as I love this tune, I could listen to just the rhythm section on loop all night.

JAMES ASHER
Umbrellas
(From *Gyroscope*, Bruton Music, 1980)

Layers of synths and otherworldly sounds sit on top of a heavy drum break accented by early hip-hop/electro claps. 'Umbrellas would comfortably sit in a "Tunes that inspire Pleasurewood" list if we had one! Synths with live drums and funky

"A well-dressed and charismatic dude introduced himself – it was Stefano Torossi. His album Feelings is one of my all-time favourites"

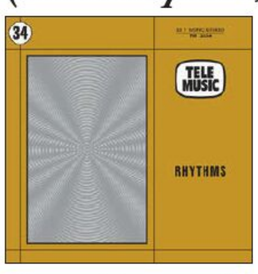
Home on the range. Pleasurewood, with wood

bass – what more could you want? I first met James at his studio, while filming for *The Library Music Film*, and I was struck by his continued enthusiasm for making music and his eagerness to adopt the latest technology, which is evident by the sounds used on 'Umbrellas', and his other releases on Bruton and Studio G. All of which would have sounded incredibly futuristic at the time.

TONIO RUBIO

Bass In Action

(From *Rhythms*, Tele Music, 1973)



If I ever feel like I need a lesson in space and groove, I'll listen to this one from Tonio Rubio and the Tele Music "Studio Sharks". This track taken from the classic French library record *Rhythms* (which has now been reissued) is a sonic delight. The drums and bass are killer, the playing and recording is tight as hell and the beat is straight up head-nod funk – hip-hop before it even existed! The icing on the cake is the beautiful Rhodes piano adding extra atmosphere in exactly the right way. For me, library music works so well when it transcends its initial purpose.

AMEDEO TOMMASI & STEFANO TOROSSI

Giardino Di Vetro

(From *Musica Per Commenti Sonori – "L'Uomo E La Natura"*, Costanza, 1986)

I was sitting in the live room of the legendary Telecine Sound recording studio in Rome with my friend Shawn Lee eating pizza. Around us the studio was buzzing with a bunch of incredible and iconic Italian library music composers and musicians that we'd somehow managed to get together in the same room for the day. One of them, a well-dressed and charismatic dude, introduced himself – it was Stefano Torossi. His album *Feelings* is one of my all-time favourites. He has a back catalogue that spans genres and styles and this tune, composed with Amedeo Tommasi, is a masterpiece. It was made for Italian TV, yet to me it's the soundtrack to a technicolour daydream. Hearing this instantly transports me to another world and is another tune I could listen to on repeat all night.

LALO SCHIFRIN

The School Bus

(From *Dirty Harry: The Original Score*, Aleph, 2004, recorded 1971)

There's not much I can say about this that hasn't already been said. It's a next level cinematic funk classic. I think over the years almost every band I've been in has done a cover version of this! The entire *Dirty Harry* soundtrack is fantastic. The main theme has the amazing drums and percussion with the orchestral elements and themes, 'Scorpio's View' features the fizzy string synth and waterphone, but 'The School Bus' has those drums with that fuzz bass and then towards the end of the track you get the strings and vocals in unison plus the sinister brass. Magnificent.

They Live is out now on Farfalla

Dana Gavanski: in a comfortable place
PHOTO: JACK TENNANT.

The Shape Of Things To Come

Twenty twenty-four is already looking like an exceptional year for music new and old.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS and **ANDY MORTEN** dive in head-first

Ace always offers plenty of top-notch soul, with an array of compilations, **MILLIE JACKSON**'s seminal *Live & Outrageous* on vinyl, 2-LP *This Is Goldwax*, 3-CD *Fame Songwriter Demos* and a Paul Weller-curated soul collection. In the jazz field are singles from **LONNIE LISTON SMITH**, **GARY BARTZ**, and many more. Jon Savage returns with *Secret Public*. There are also further all-encompassing compilations that we are very excited about: *Tomorrow's Fashion: Library Electronica 1972-1987*, an untitled baroque comp from Bob Stanley, his intriguing *Liverpool Sunset* set, and *A Good Thing Going: Girl Group Sounds 1962-1967*. **THE SEEDS'** *A Web Of Sound* gets the 2-LP treatment, Keb Darge pulls together a fine collection of garage, and there's **THE PRISONERS'** majestic *Electric Fit* EP.

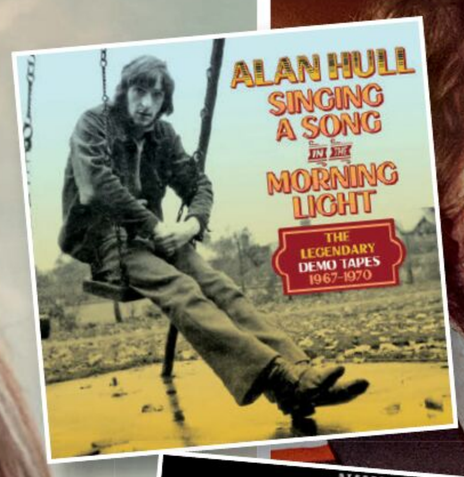
Sundazed have a busy year planned with reissues from **KAY ADAMS**, **DR JOHN**, **SUPERFINE DANDELION**, **GYPSY**, **COMBUSTIBLE EDISON**, **BLUE CHEER** and **TANGERINE ZOO**. **Pseudonym** are currently working on an 11-CD **Q65** box set. **Guerssen** have a wealth of goodies lined up, taking in Nicaraguan '70s psych-rockers **PODER DEL ALMA**, UK private-press **LUIGI ANA DA BOYS'** *Feelin' The Ceiling*, the unreleased *Songs* by **VERTIGO**, **MISTY**'s fab *Here Again*, **SAMUEL PRODY**'s heavy self-titled, and **RUMPELSTILTSKIN**, featuring hard-rock/funk from Herbie Flowers, Alan Parker, Alan Hawkshaw and gang. US acid-folk deities **MAJOR ARCANA**, Korean psych/fuzz band **SANILLUM**'s three albums, plus two final outings from our own Andy Morten's **BRONCO BULLFROG**, **HOMER**'s private-press US psych-rock album *Grown In The USA,* Belgium bands **THE SHIVERS'** *Walpurgis* and proggers **WATERLOO**'s *First Battle,* dark UK psych from **HORSE**'s '70 self-titled, and **JEREMY HARMER**'s ultra-rare UK baroque/folk *Idiosyncratics And Swallows Wings* round out an incredible selection. As one would hope, all of these are on vinyl, as are three fine new reissues from **Jackpot**: **GANDALF** and **SRC**'s '68 self-titled outings, and the never before on vinyl *Live* '79 album by **WALL OF VOODOO**, plus an EP.

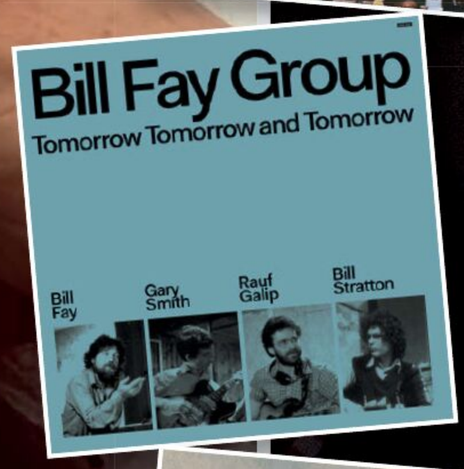
The **Cherry Red** family is readying **ALAN HULL**'s 4-CD *Singing A Song In The Morning Light: The Legendary Demos 1967-1970*, and 3-CD sets *I See You Live On Love Street: The Music Of Laurel Canyon 1967-1975, New Guitars In Town: Power Pop 1978-82* and *Patterns On The Window: The British Progressive Pop Sounds Of 1974*, with **HIGH TIDE**'s *Sea Shanties* and **PROCOL HARUM**'s *Shine On Brightly* on vinyl.

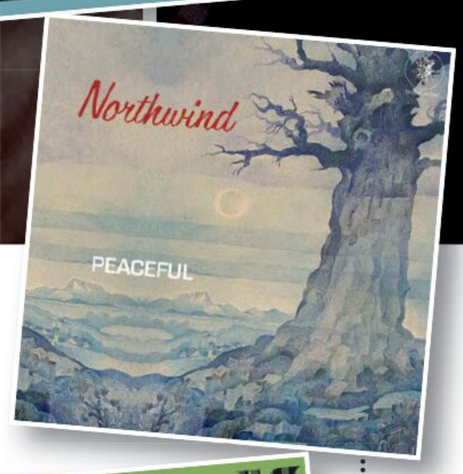
Hyperloop will issue unreleased material on 45 from **THE MAGIC MUSHROOMS** ('I'm All Ears' and 'Pain') and **SEAN BUCKLEY & THE BREADCRUMBS'** 'Bye Bye USA' backed with the Shel Talmy produced 'Everybody Know'. A split by New Zealanders' **JUDGE WAYNE & THE CONVICTS** covering The Animals' 'I'm Cryin'' and **THE UNUSUALS'** bad ass garage-punker 'I'm Walking Babe' are rather exciting too. **Think Like A Key** also offer a run of sevens, with **BLOSSOM TOES'** 'Postcard', **THE MIRAGE**'s 'The Wedding Of Ramona Blair', **THE CRAZY WORLD**

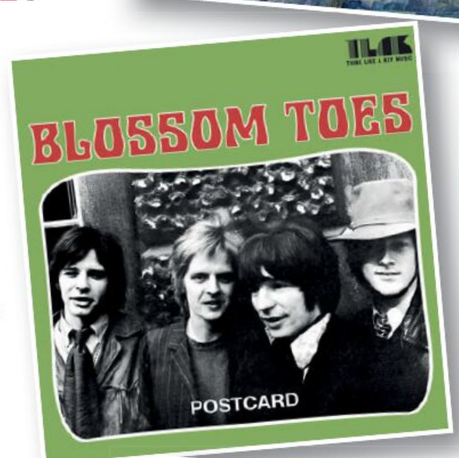
Ian Skelly tokin' ruefully, and fellow psyched scousers The Zutons

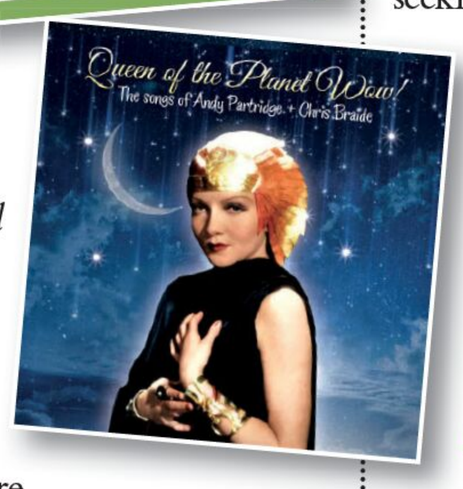
PHOTO: JONATHAN TURTON











OF ARTHUR BROWN's 'The Devil's Grip' and **ANJI CAKEBREAD**'s under-the-radar '78 single 'Dear Computer'. Album-wise, there'll be **JOHN BROMLEY**'s *Songs*, **THE TREMELOES**' *Master*, **SHAWN PHILLIPS**' recently recovered '75 sessions, and **THE SHIRTS**' *Live*.

Munster continue their trawl through South America and beyond with sevens from **TRAFFIC SOUNDS / BLACK SUGAR**'s 'La Camita', **ALL & NOTHING**'s 'Underground Vibrations No 2', and **PAN**, plus albums, **TRAFFIC SOUND**'s *Virgin*, **MARC JONSON**'s *Groove Tismo*, **SHELLY**'s self-titled, **GHETTO BROTHERS**' *Power-Fuerza*, **NIKI & THE CORVETTES**' self-titled, and compilations *Blow My Mind 2* and *Disperú*. **Bear Family** issue the usual high-quality rockabilly and country, but it's *Heavy Kraut! Teil 1: Wie der Hardrock nach Deutschland kam, 1970-1976* that interests us the most. **Omnivore** meanwhile will release some classic live bootlegs recorded at NYC's The Bottom Line, including UK folk-rockers **STEELEYE SPAN**'s '74 show. There'll be lots more funk and soul too, including **OHIO PLAYERS'** '69 classic *Observations In Time*. Lovers of soul will also be glad to hear that **The Numero Group** are issuing a huge array of *Eccentric Soul* label overviews, including Tammy and Cobra, while **Craft Recordings**' Jazz Dispensary series dusts off **JOHNNY LYTLE**'s '72 soul-jazz rarity *People & Love*.

After the recent Beatles reboots, February sees the expanded 50th anniversary edition of **WINGS**' *Band On The Run* with the usual **UME/MPL** bells and whistles, including a new Giles Martin Atmos mix. **Easy Action** release **MELANIE**'s *Stoneground* as the intended double-album, as well as albums from **LORDS OF THE NEW CHURCH**, **THE CHURCH**, **T REX**, **MICK RONSON** and others. **Secretly Canadian** issue the complete version of **BILL FAY GROUP**'s *Tomorrow Tomorrow And Tomorrow* in February, while **Domino** present **NICO**'s *The Marble Index* and *Desertshore* in March. Collectors of the arcane and obscure are in for a treat with a new round of **Bright Carvings** releases, kicking off with **The Irish Bahai's**' *Peace Will Shine* (Irish spiritual folk-rock from '78), **RAVEN-TRAITORS GATE** (unreleased '73 rock), **TIM PHILLIP**'s *The Giant Tortoise* (dreamy hippy stuff, '68), **Northwind**'s *Peaceful* (Scottish prog band's '70/72 acetates), **NTP**'s *Upstaged* (outsider underground duo, '71).

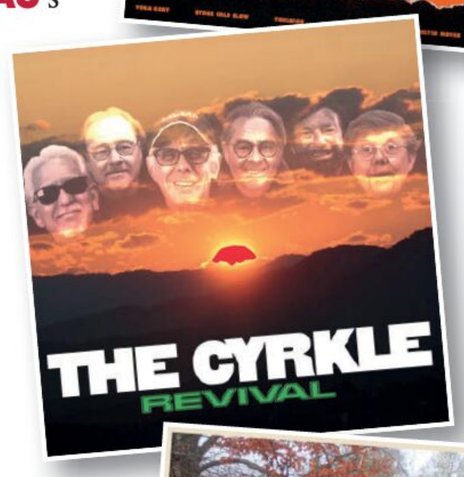
Italian library label **Four Flies** offer a veritable feast of vinyl to scratch that itch. On seven-inch is **RIZ ORTOLANI**'s 'Confessione di un commissario' (unreleased until 2016, composed for '71 crime movie). Albums consist of **LARRY MANTECA**'s *Zombie Mandingo* (new imaginary soundtrack), **GUIDO & MAURIZIO DE ANGELIS**' *Squadra Antifurto* (previously unreleased '76 soundtrack), and last but not least a fine compilation, *Africamore: The Afro-Funk Side Of Italy 1973-1978*.

Liverpool's **THE ZUTONS** return with *The Big Decider* (**IcePop**), recorded at Abbey Road with Nile Rogers and Ian Broudie. For those seeking more scouse sounds, **AV8** are releasing *Ye Gods*, **MARTIN CARR**'s first solo album, on vinyl for the first time, **IAN SKELLY'**s third solo album, and **DAVE JACKSON**'s first solo album *Cathedral Mountain*, with Shack's John Head on guitar. **MOLLY LEWIS** has made quite a name for herself with her unique whistling and lounge music. Debut album *On The Lips* is out next month on **Secretly**.

The always fascinating **DANA GAVANSKI**'s *How To Feel Uncomfortable* will arrive in April on **Full Time Hobby**. The spectral **ALISON COTTON**'s *Engelchen* in March on **Rocket Recordings**. Ghostly sounds also abound on analogue synth man **KEITH SEATMAN**'s *Counting To Ten And Back Again* (**Castles In Space**). **ATA** will unleash a brand new Ethio-jazz inspired album by **THE SORCERERS**, **Fruits de Mer** have a few hot releases, with cosmic proggers **MOON**

Continues over

The US Gypsy with a further release on Sundazed; inset: The Remo Four, as featured on Ace's Liverpool Sunset



GOOSE's *Murmurations* and an extended triple-album version of **SOFT HEARTED SCIENTIST**'s *Waltz Of The Weekend*, **CUSTARD FLUX**'s *Einsteinium Delirium* will appear on subsidiary label **Friends Of The Fish**. Nick Saloman's **Blue Matter** will see a vinyl reissue of maverick **ANTON BARBEAU**'s *In The Village Of The Apple Sun*, a new one from '80s psych veteran **PAUL ROLAND**, *Morbid Beauty*, and the first appearance, in any form, of **MAURIZIO 'ANGUS' BIDOLI**'s *Diary Of Dreams*. US indie act **THE BLACK WATCH** return with *The Morning Papers Have Given Us The Vapours* (**Black Watch Music** via **SRD**). **Easy Action** have **CHRIS BRAIDE & ANDY PARTRIDGE**'s *Queen Of The Planet* EP. Sussex folky **JASON MCNIFF** will release his ninth album *Everything's A Song* (**Tombola**). In March, **THE HANGING STARS**' *On A Golden Shore* lands on **Loose Music**, **THE BEVIS FROND**'s *Focus On Nature* on **Fire**, and **THE HIGH LLAMAS**' *Hey Panda* on **Drag City**.

New stuff on **Think Like A Key** includes **PETER DALTREY**'s *The Leopard And The Lamb*, **BEDSIT POETS**' *All Roads Lead Me Back*, **ROME 56**'s *Paradise Is Free* and **FRAN ASHCROFT**'s *Songs That Never Were*. **Kool Kat** has new albums from, amongst others, **WESLEY FULLER** and **JOHN HOWARD**. Rise Above's Lee Dorrian launches **Popclaw**, with the first release from **CALDWELL**, whose soft/baroque-pop will float many a boat. On **Rise Above**, **UNCLE ACID & THE DEADBEATS** return with a new album, promised to be quite a departure, and **ADMIRAL SIR CLOUDESLEY SHOVELL** will be back with more of the same ole greasy rock 'n' roll. On the '60s beat-inspired front, **THE HORNETS** have an album on the boil for March, provisionally titled *Hornets' Nest*, **THE MARK THREE** take things into freakbeat with *Paisley Paradise* (**FAB**) and on **Detour**, **STUDIO 68!** return with *Live At The 100 Club* EP, along with a vinyl-only rarities comp from **THE NUTHINS**, entitled *Oddities, All Sorts And Magic Mixtures*. Also on the garage trip will be six new singles from **Rogue Disque** by **THE MIKE BELL CARTEL**, **THE MOURNING AFTER**, **THE LOONS**, **THE LIQUORICE EXPERIMENT**, **THE ON & ONS**, and **THE NIGHT TIMES**. Garage/punk label **Chaputa!** has a lot lined up for the coming months, kicking off with mad Spaniards **THE SMOGGERS**' Fuzztones/Sonics double-sided covers 45 'She's Wicked' / 'Strychnine', **THE JUKEEZ**' 'White Liquor', **THE BROOMS**' *Freakin' Out* and the soundtrack to 2000 cult movie *Superstarlet AD*. Plans are also being hatched to reissue albums from **Estrus** and **THE FLAMIN' SIDEBURNS**' back catalogue. German psych band **TRAUM** debut on **Hypnotic Bridge**, recalling UK psych circa '67 on 'Hold The Line', and there's Hendrix-y psych-rock from Portland's **TRABANT**'s on 'Mantra'. Classic and heavy-rock fans will be pleased to learn that **BLACKBERRY SMOKE** return with new album *Be Right Here* (**3 Legged / Thirty Tigers**). **Big Stir** will be releasing the first album by soft-psych act **THE CYRKLE** in over half a century. Let's hope that *Revival* delivers. And last, but certainly not least, on the back of their gorgeous new single 'Golden Days', **THE LEMON TWIGS** will be unleashing a new album soon.

Fearless

Lost sounds rediscovered in the ethereal music of **LOVE OF THE BRAVE**

There's a song on the debut album by Love Of The Brave titled 'Dusted Off' that may be addressed to a lover but is also an apposite observation about the record. Producer and musician Neil Innes was in the process of refurbishing his Leeds studio when he pulled out the tapes on which the album were recorded and had a listen. "I was surprised at how good it was and that it still stood up to stuff I was making now," says Neil, who, with Pete Williams, founded ATA Records in 2014. The Love Of The Brave album had been intended as the first release on the label but sat on a shelf for a decade before Innes decided there was an audience for it.

It was worth the wait. The album is a stunning collaboration between Innes and singer Fuzzy Jones, a collection of psych-folk songs recorded on analogue equipment that are redolent of Pentangle and Rotary Connection. Jones possesses a powerfully expressive voice, sometimes tender and caressing, at others bluesy and strident. Her lyrics touch on deeply personal issues. "Basically," she reflects of their composition, "it helped me process a lot of LGBTQ shit I hadn't managed to years before and was a big piece of therapy for my OCD."

Innes and Jones worked with numerous musicians to make the record, among them Chris Dawkins on guitar, Tony Burkill on tenor sax and flute, and Joost Hendrickx on drums. The result is an album at once intimate and epic as showcased by the song 'Infidel', which shifts from spectral acoustic guitar to a surge of brass and choral singing.

Whether there will be another record remains to be seen. Innes reveals that he and Jones wrote material for two more albums. But with Jones now based in France, the future is uncertain. "I sometimes wonder if I could match it," Innes muses, "but would definitely give it a go." Let's hope it doesn't take another decade.

As told to Clive Webb

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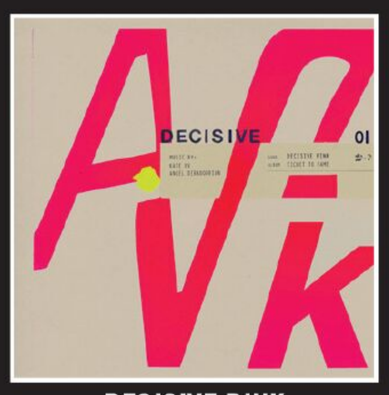

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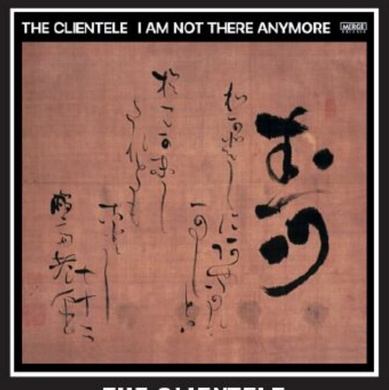

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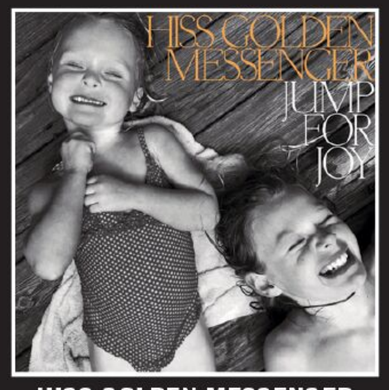

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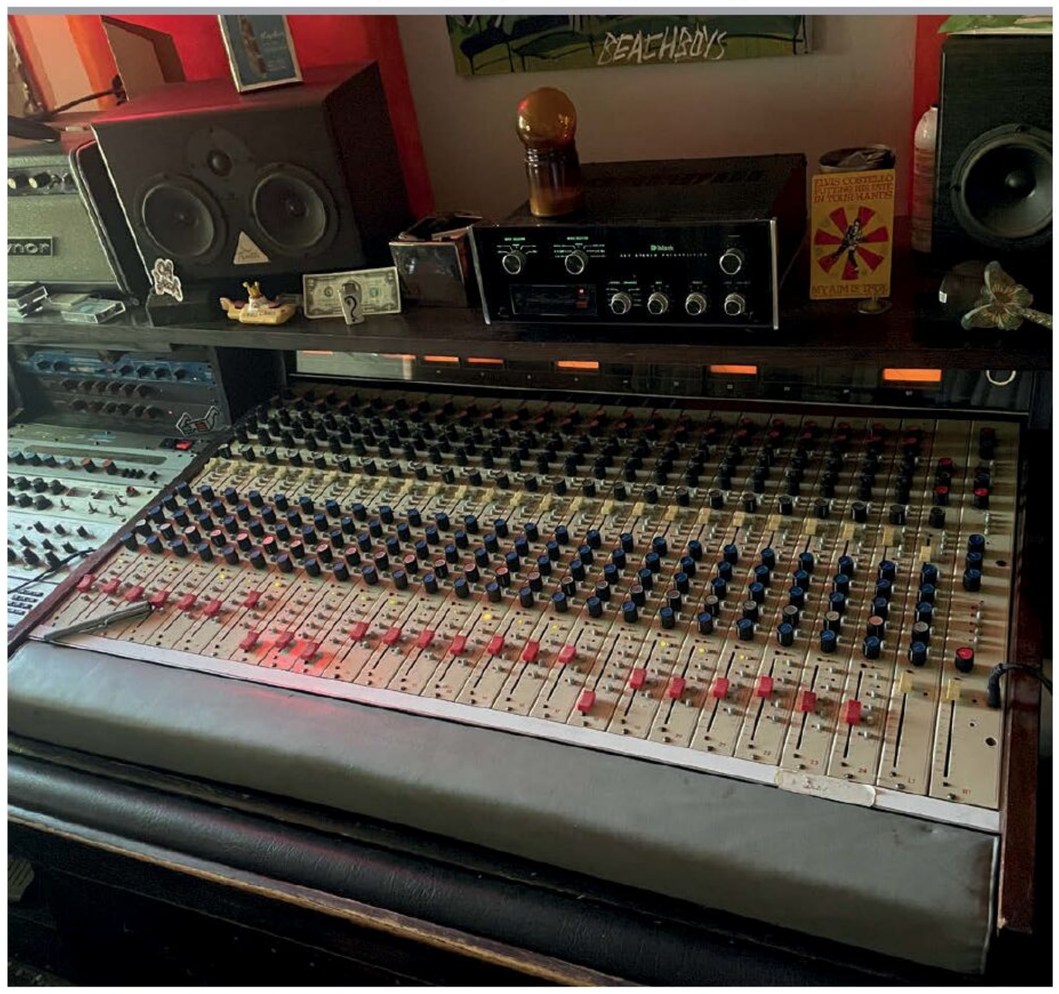
Jason Falkner, his desk and guitars in his Los Angeles home studio



Limited Edition

As JASON FALKNER's long awaited new album nears completion, JON 'MOJO' MILLS sits down with the polymath and guitar hero for hire

"It's taken a long time, partially because psychologically for me, when I go out and play with somebody else, I'm inserting myself into their catalogue and their vibe," begins Jason Falkner on why his first album in 15 years has taken so long. "I can't write anything on the road. It takes me a long time to get back into, 'Oh, I'm Jason, I'm this guy who write songs.'"

Lockdown gave Jason, like many other musicians, time to play, write and consider. "The lyrics always take work," he laughs, "which I consider my therapy." Having time was a necessity.

"One of the other things that's become important to me," he continues, "are the sonics. I have an old '70s desk in my second bedroom, an Audio Arts console, highly modified for a Warner Brothers studio in Nashville. It is basically a one-off. I have some very interesting stuff. I have Neuman compressors, they're mainly known for their microphones. I have a lot of compressors. I probably have one of the rarest pieces of gear on the planet too, and I'll tell you why. But it might take the whole interview." He continues to explain how he bought a stereo compressor from Canada with two big VU metres on it, which looked interesting. It was old, and the cables had rotted, but the transformers were still working. As the sole bidder, he paid $99. And soon found out that it had been made by one-time Music Machine member, and later legendary producer, Keith Olsen for his short-lived electronics division in 1969. It transpired they'd only made four.

"In record making, studios started getting really good around '74, because 24-track tape machines were still a fairly new thing. It had been 16 before that. Two-inch tape has probably the best sound in the world, as far as I'm concerned." He mentions Warren Zevon's *Excitable Boy* and Steely Dan's *Aja* as being perfect. But it's the sound he calls "mid-fi" that inspires him most. "I love the harsh tone of European psych, notably the female Turkish singer Selda Bağcan and the Scott Walker records. His beautiful ballads still sound aggressive. The debut Heart album is incredible. That's my whole vibe with this new album." Falkner loves music and talking music.

"I have a very bizarre style," he says, returning to the home-recording process. "Drums first, and then I just layer on top of that. Like I'm a band, but it's just one guy. I only have two guests on this record. Britt Daniel from Spoon and Mark Giuliana, the jazz maestro, who also plays with St Vincent. He's a very noted drummer."

Of the feel of the album, he states, "I wouldn't say it's any kind of departure from what I've done in the past musically. If anything, I've tried to make it a little bit more direct with less musical tangents. For the most part, it's more about the human condition, which is always what I'm writing about. My songs are about us as people, navigating troubled waters."

The working title is *The Soft Limit* and it should be out in the spring. It's been too long.

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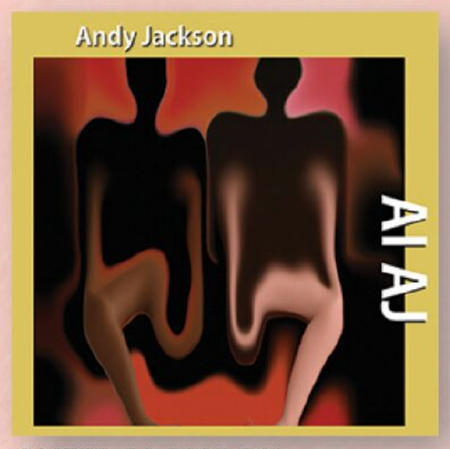

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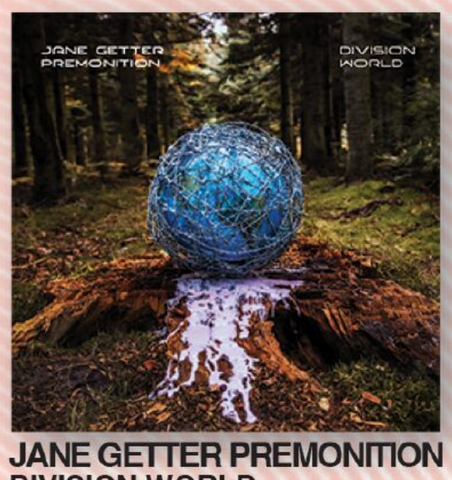

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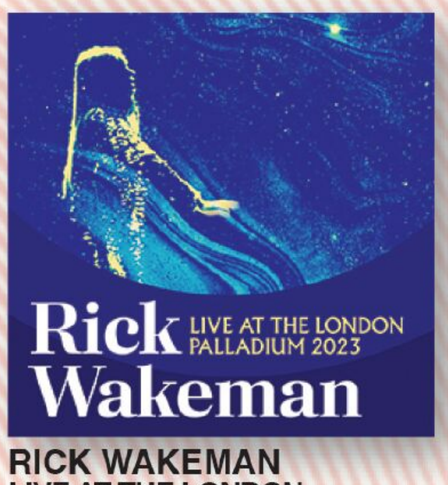

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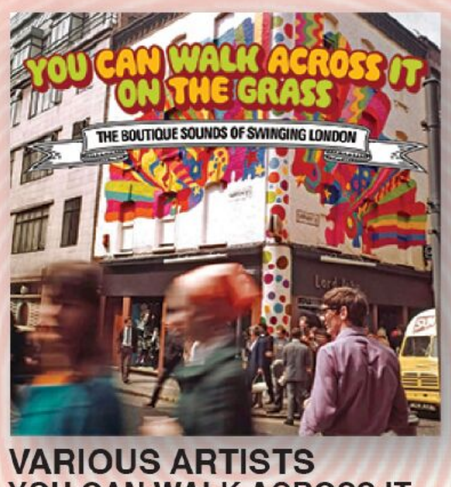

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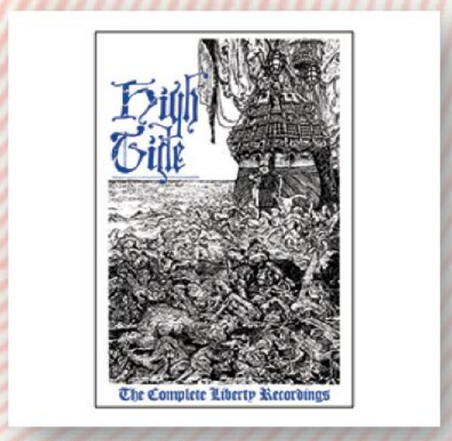

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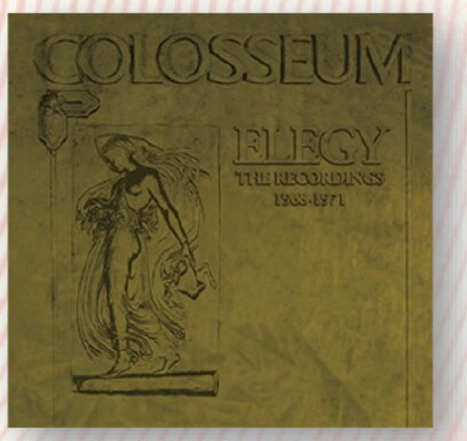

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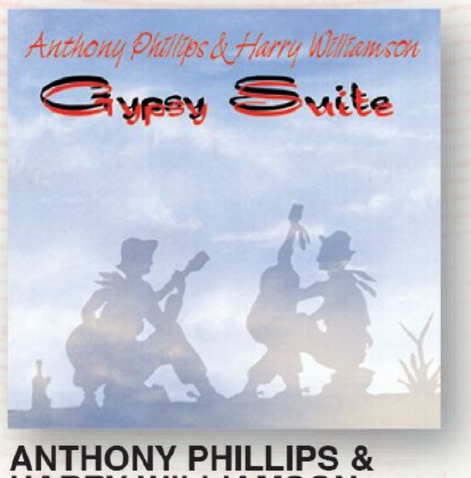

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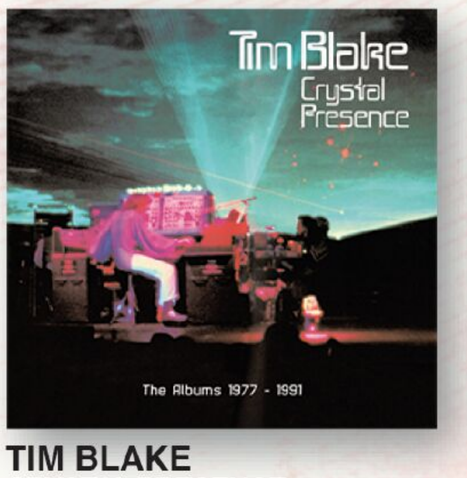

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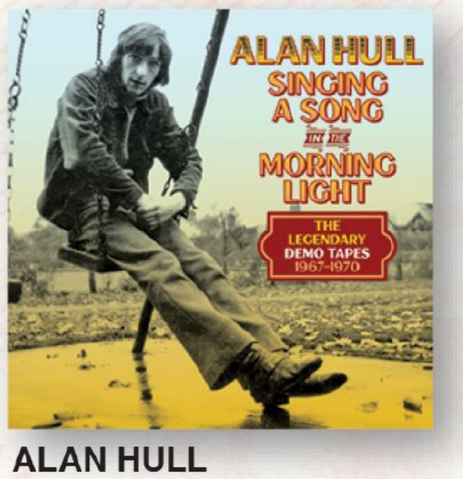

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Sound Seeker

Tom Powell AKA **def.fo** aims for sonic and spiritual nirvana on his solo debut.

DUNCAN FLETCHER delves into its "psychedelicfolkhop"

As bass player with Michael Head & The Red Elastic Band, the last couple of years have been busy for Tom Powell, but that's not stopped him crafting an album of his own. Released under his musical *nom-de-plume* def.fo, *Eternity* is a genre-melding journey through life's big questions. "I've always been a deep thinker since I was a child" says Liverpool-based Tom. "Which is as much a blessing as a curse. Reflective of this, there are some heavy topics and rhetorical questions being asked on the record: life, death and spirituality to name a few. I try to live life with a positive outlook as much as possible, and the only way I could navigate through such unascertainable queries was to portray a message of positivity, humility and appreciation. Hopefully this comes across throughout the record."

Eternity was originally conceived as a 21-track concept album before being whittled down to a more digestible 10 tracks. It was co-produced by Tom's dad Steve, known for his work on Head's 1997 album *The Magical World Of The Strands*. "We make a great production team and I think that shows in the music. I've learned a lot from him over the years, but something I really latched onto was that dynamic balance is key. When you have several instruments playing at the same time, you can't just have everything loud and expect it to sound good, there needs to be equilibrium for the parts to breathe."

Shimmering guitars, keys, flute, cello, violin, banjo and drum loops add to a sound which Tom describes as "psychedelicfolkhop". "Some of my favourite artists of recent years such as Katy J Pearson and Nilüfer Yanya are hard to define, genre-wise," says Tom. "That unique quality of blending genres really interests me."

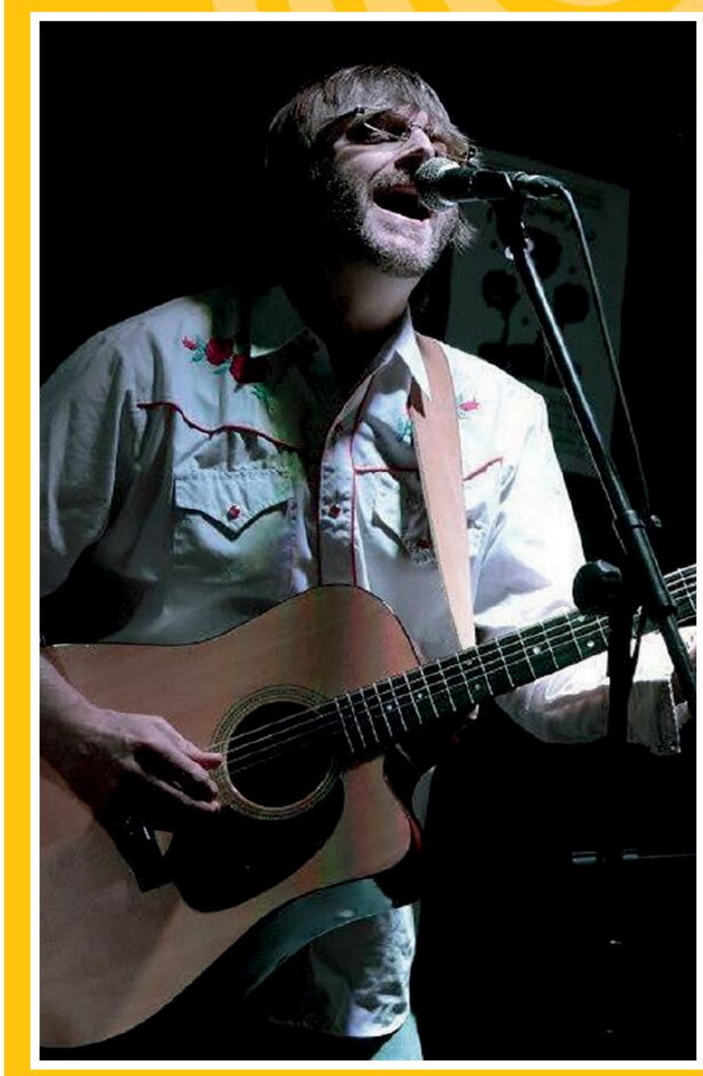
Chris Geddes (Belle & Sebastian) contributes Mellotron flute and vibraphone keys, while Michael Head adds vocals to a couple of tracks. "Mick's my favourite songwriter – he's the don! It was a dream come true to have him on the album. He was really complimentary and encouraging about my songs, which meant a lot to me, it gave me that extra confidence to put my music out there."

Shindig! asks how Tom settled on the unusual def.fo moniker. "It's as scouse as a bowl of scouse! Inspired by 'Beck'," explains Tom. "I wanted a one-word artist name. I was struggling and mentioned this to my mate Stuey. He said, 'You say deffo a lot, you should use that!', to which I replied, 'Deffo mate!'"

Eternity is out now from www.def.fo

Definitely Tom Powell
PHOTO: JOHN JOHNSON

hear & now



Singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and producer **IAN M BAILEY** shares his current fave raves

LISTENING (OLD

I've recently been listening to Jackson Browne's *For Everyman*, *The Best Of Eric Burdon's War*, Talk Talk's *The Colour Of Spring*, Echo & The Bunnymen's *Ocean Rain*, Eric Taylor, *Nancy & Lee Again*, Cosmic Rough Riders' *Enjoy The Melodic Sunshine*, Micky Newbury, Little Richard's *Playlist: The Best Of The Reprise Years*, The Jam's *All Mod Cons*, Bob Dylan's *Highway 61 Revisited*, Pink Floyd's *Animals* and Buddy Holly.

LISTENING (NEW)

Really enjoying Jalen Ngonda's new album *Come Around And Love Me* – great production and definitely a nod to Marvin Gaye. The new Stones album and The Beatles' *Red* and *Blue* remix albums. Debatable subject of course... personally, I prefer the songs as they were recorded originally.

READING

My daughters bought me *The Byrds 1964-1967*, which I'm constantly picking up. I love Lewis Carroll and have just finished *Through The Looking Glass* again and am about to start reading *Living On Borrowed Time*, a memoir of John Lennon's life , written by his personal assistant Fred Seaman.

WATCHING

Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*. The atmosphere and building tension is just brilliant, and Jack Nicholson plays Jack Torrance's psychological demise wonderfully. Re-runs of *Fawlty Towers*. The comedy timing is just perfect and timeless and never fails to raise a smile.

As told to Andy Morten

We Live In Strange Times is out now on Kool Kat

Decca celebrates the legacy of the iconic DERAM Records.

David Bowie - Laughing with Liza

Bowie's early Deram singles collected in a 7" box for the very first time, including a never before released version of Space Oddity, his breakthrough hit.

Mellow Candle – Swaddling Songs

The sole 1972 album from a unique band within Deram and early 70s progressive music history: a vanishingly rare and in demand album.

Someones Band – Someones Band

The band's self-titled, one and only album on Deram, has become one of the rarest and most sought-after bluesy progressive rock LPs of the period. Remastered and available on 1LP splatter.

Caravan – In the Land of Grey and Pink

One of the defining albums of the era, deemed one of the Greatest Prog Rock Albums of All Time (Rolling Stone) and Best Cosmic Rock Albums (Q and MOJO).

This reissue set features a pink and grey marble 2LP, which features live BBC live sessions tracks made available for the first time on vinyl.

DECCA DERAM

Worth the extra "o", MOOON, with Gijs (left)
PHOTO: FRANKIE LAMBERTS

Buy Me A Smile

Dutch trio **MOOON** are among the most talented when it comes to recreating the sounds of the original psychedelic era. **JON 'MOJO' MILLS** meets Gijs de Jong over tea and toast

When MOOON started, drummer Gijs de Jong was only 14. His brother Tom was five years older, and cousin Timo van Lierop was 21. "Tom and I had never played an instrument before, so we were also learning to play on the spot, and discovering our sound," explains Gijs. "We just got into 'old music'. At the beginning our influences were bands like Deep Purple, Pink Floyd, Golden Earring, Ten Years After etc, but also modern bands like Jacuzzi Boys, Mystic Braves and DeWolff." A single and an album appeared betraying all of the above, with album track and later single 'Mary You Wanna' taking on a purer garage styling. "We got deeper and deeper," Gijs agrees, "and discovered so many bands from the '60s. We were meeting like-minded people from The Netherlands – The Black Marble Selection, Frankie Fuzz, Fleur – and we all became good friends. Everybody shared their newest music discoveries." With a scene in place MOOON progressed like a real '60s band, constantly developing their sound and look. Their 2019 album *Safari* was a concept piece with an added sunshine-pop layer due to their fascination with Curt Boettcher. The studio was key.

"We kept working on the album until all three of us were satisfied with the result, and that really paid off"

The forthcoming *III,* recorded and perfected over lockdown in Tom's all analogue studio, is another step forward. "We wanted to do an album we can play live again," says Gijs of the change in direction, "with just the three of us. Rock 'n' roll with a lot of vocal harmonies! Our influences were the late '60s mod and hard-rock bands like The Move, The Who, The Gods and Nazz (who are a huge influence), but also bands like The Hollies and Grapefruit. It still ended up sounding like MOOON though.

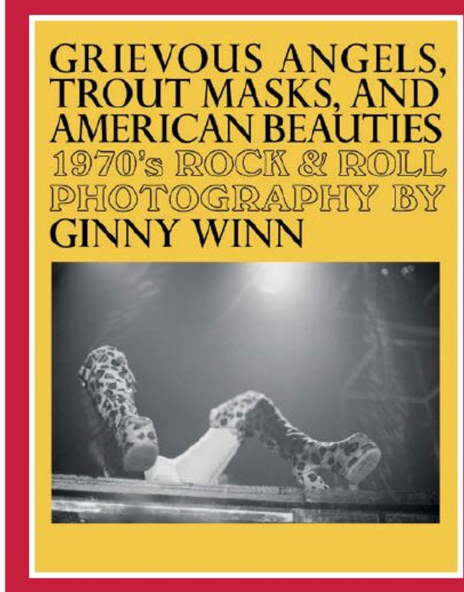
"We recorded the bass, drum and guitar all at the same time, in four days. After that we spent about a year on recording and fine tuning the vocals and several other overdubs! That includes accidentally erasing a few takes here and there while recording on drunk nights. But hey, we had the time! We kept working on the album until all three of us were satisfied with the result, and that really paid off. I couldn't be happier with it." Over the mooon, in fact.

III is out on 23rd February on Excelsior / Soundflat

good news

The pioneering artist Pauline Boty was a founder of the British Pop Art movement of the '60s. Her paintings and collages challenged gender conventions with their feminist assertions of women's identity and sexuality, as well as an iconoclastic perspective on the worlds of politics and male celebrity. Long overlooked, more than five decades after her untimely death her work has finally embraced a large and growing audience. The Gazelli Art House in London has curated a major retrospective of her radical and innovative work that runs until 24th February. Those unable to see the exhibition in person can take a 3D tour via the gallery website.
gazelliarthouse.com

Why bother with Blackpool rock when you can feast on folk instead? The coastal resort's Winter Gardens is host over the weekend of Friday 12th to Sunday 14th January of the UK West Coast Folk Festival. Boasting 33 acts across three stages, the stellar line-up features a host of established and upcoming musicians, among them Cara Dillon, Dan Friedman and Eddie Reader. Topping the bill is maestro Richard Thompson, performing a rare headline set. The festival organisers have made the prospect of a winter trip to the seaside all the more enticing by including an option when purchasing tickets to book hotel accommodation.
westcoastfestival.co.uk



Clear your coffee tables! Coming on 1st March from Fantagraphics Books is *Grievous Angels, Trout Masks, And American Beauties*, a collection of images by Ginny Winn documenting the Los Angeles music scene of the '70s. Winn was an in-house photographer for Warner/Reprise and was granted access to a roster of artists that included the likes of Gram Parsons, John Cale, Captain Beefheart and Emmylou Harris. The book also features candid, unseen shots of other musical luminaries such as Bob Marley and Joni Mitchell. Featuring an essay by Winn's friend, the folk singer Maria Muldaur, this revealing volume can be enjoyed with a hot brew of your choice.
fantagraphics.com

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Thoughts And Visions

Some *Shindig!* readers will be aware that editor-in-chief Jon 'Mojo' Mills was once in a garage band called **THE NUTHINS**.

PHIL SUGGITT gets the retrospective low-down

Originally called The Good For Nothings, The Nuthins formed in Salisbury in 1989, after being inspired by a Fuzztones gig at the local arts centre. "We were only really into '65-67 stuff, whether that was The Animals and Q65 or The Byrds and Love, and all of the garage and teen beat bands from across the world," says Jon of their influences. "People like The Standells and We The People, who mixed up pop, fuzz and psych, were pivotal. When we were around, bands played garage by the books, so it was always acts at home like The Thanes and The Mystreated, and slighter older ones from overseas like The Chesterfield Kings, The Tell-Tale Hearts and The Wylde Mammoths that we looked to."

This writer recalls many Nuthins gigs at The Wild Western Room of St. John's Tavern in Archway. Their skinny frames, bowl haircuts, Cuban heeled boots and stripy t-shirts betrayed their influences before they had played a note.

"Getting to record a single in '91 (released in '92) was a big step," says Jon of their rapid growth. "We were very green. Our early gigs in Portsmouth were a lot of fun, as was breaking into the London garage scene and getting to see and know the other bands. Before the internet it really was a different world. Playing abroad was brilliant, especially touring Italy. We were young and it was all fun. I'm proud of all of it now. We changed a lot and improved as we went on. The *Mistake* EP is great, the earlier unreleased 'Girl Has Gone' is fab, the album is good, but it was rather rushed, and the last single 'Thoughts And Visions' really does stand the test of time. I've played it a lot recently. It's the best thing we did."

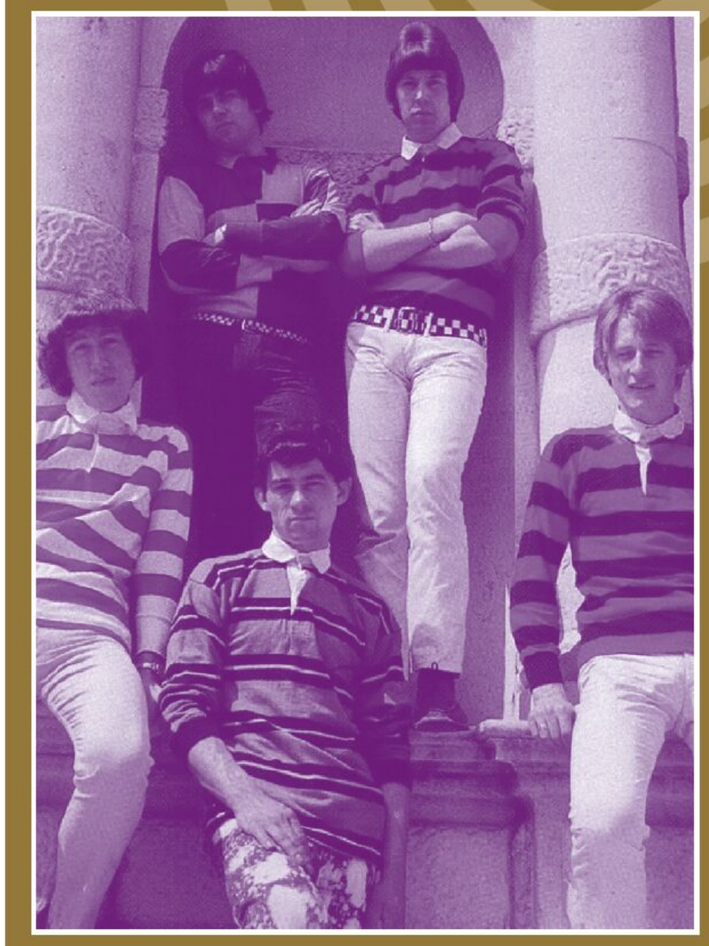
The Nuthins found it difficult to carry on by '98. "First Richie Walker (drummer and fellow band mainstay, along with organist Bob Taylor) and I moved to London," says Jon, "and then (bassist) Andy followed the year after. As we were students, money was tight. We did rehearse and intended to continue, but it just withered rather than a hard split."

"Bands like The Standells and We The People, who mixed up pop, fuzz and psych, were pivotal"

1 Step Forward... Further Steps is out now on Detour. Oddities, All Sorts And Magic Mixtures follows soon after

At the time of the *1 Step Forward* album. L-R: Richie Walker, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Andy Cornick, Bob Taylor

next issue



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SPIRIT

Their masterpiece *The 12 Dreams Of Dr Sardonicus* in the words of those who were there

MICHEL POLNAREFF

Inside the bizarre story of French pop's strangest star

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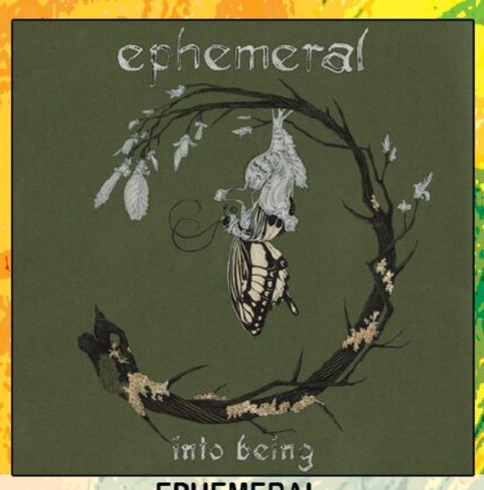

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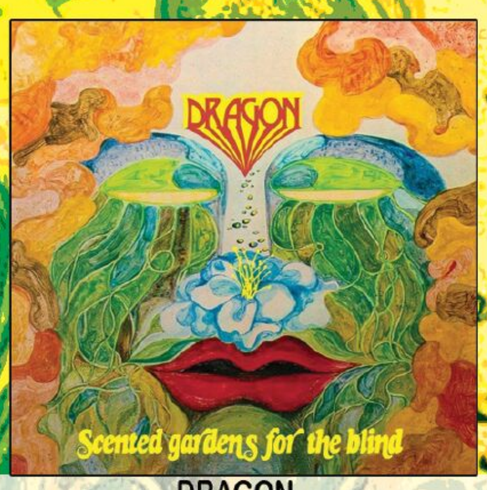

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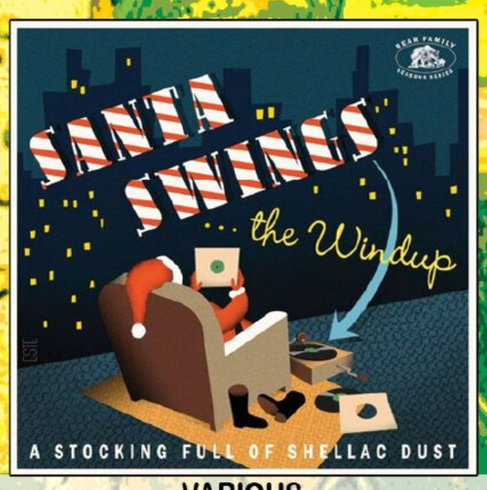
New Zealand progressive quintets 2nd album enjoys a welcome reissue on limited edition vinyl. A paragon of progressive rock marked by long guitar solos and beautiful flights of keyboards.



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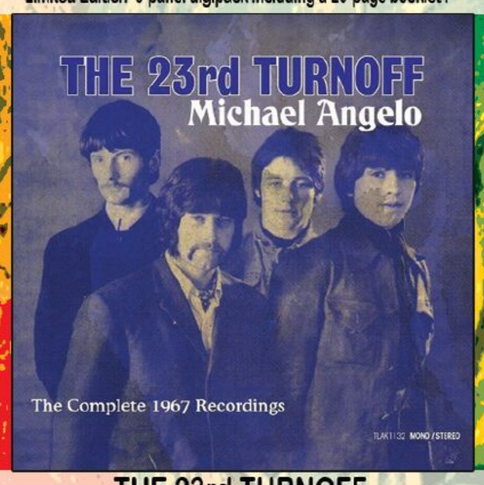
Beloved sixties psychedelic icon unveils brand new solo album blending the nostalgic vibes of the 60's with contemporary nuances. - Limited vinyl pressing includes signed postcard.



THE 23rd TURNOFF
MICHAEL ANGELO:THE COMPLETE 1967 RECORDINGS
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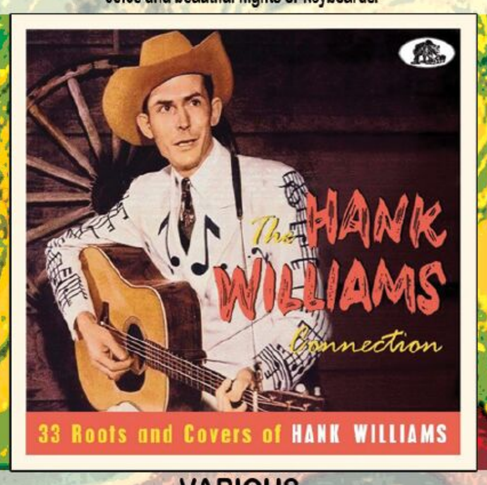
The complete recordings from the mysterious British psychedelic pop group- originating from the ashes of Merseybeat band The Kirkby's.



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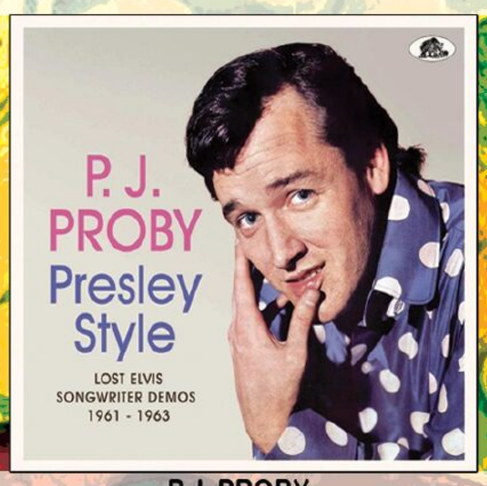

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From The Ashes

JOHNNIE JOHNSTONE talks to John Mills-Cockell of pioneering Canadian electronic trio **SYRINX** about the story behind their 1971 swansong *Long Lost Relatives*

The uncles you never knew you had. Syrinx in 1971. L-R: Alan Wells, John Mills-Cockell, Doug Pringle
PHOTO: BART SCHOALES

Syrinx had barely released their debut album – a ground-breaking collection of largely improvised electronica – when disaster struck. "We were halfway through recording the second album in a little studio in Toronto called Magic Tracks," recalls composer-in-chief John Mills-Cockell. "My road manager came to me in the morning and told us there had been a fire in the studio – and all our equipment had been destroyed. We were completely shocked. We lost all the tapes for the album." Mercifully, the record in question *would* eventually be released. Entitled *Long Lost Relatives*, it appeared on the True North label in early 1971.

The pioneering Canadian trio – Mills-Cockell (keyboards), Doug Pringle (sax) and Alan Wells (percussion) – knew they possessed that special something and were determined to ensure the fire didn't put an end to their aspirations. They were aided in their recovery by fellow musicians who grouped together with almost 2,000 young Ontarians to host a benefit show at Toronto's St Lawrence Market Hall. The funds were immediately put to use. "My manager in New York, Felix Pappalardi [of Mountain fame], suggested we go down to Manny's, the biggest musical instrument store in New York. There we were able to choose a new set of instruments. Doug picked up a soprano sax and I came across the ARP 2500 (the first commercial modular synth), which would end up shaping the sound of that second album."

Mills-Cockell was an accomplished composer with a colourful CV. Together with his high school buddy Doug Pringle, he played in Toronto's club circuit before Mills-Cockell was invited to compose music for theatre in Ottawa. He then made three albums with *avant-garde* electronic group Intersystems. "I was completely enchanted by John Cage. I went to his concerts and lectures – he had such an amazing sense of mystery." At the same time, he founded The Mind Excursion Centre in Montreal, a freeform art space, before going on to record *Aardvark* in '69 with psych-pop outfit Kensington Market. In Vancouver he briefly joined the ranks of Hydro-Electric Streetcar.

"I met Alan Wells through a course Ann Southam and I were giving on electronic music for beginners at The University Of Toronto (Royal Conservatory)." Wells had been involved peripherally with Kensington Market, and soon the pair began composing and improvising together, striking up a firm friendship. When they resettled in Toronto they teamed up with Pringle and founded a new, unnamed group. "I remember sitting on top of a rooftop on King Street and it's there we came up with the name Syrinx. We used a dictionary and found out it had six meanings, one of which is the passageway from the underside of the pyramids into the inner tomb." Syrinx was born.

"It was fairly adventurous of CTV. They filmed us us sitting out on a rock in the middle of Lake Ontario and the popularity of the show lifted it to #1 in several Canadian cities"

Bernie Finkelstein, who'd worked alongside Mills-Cockell in Kensington Market, had recently founded his own label True North and agreed to finance their first release. Largely improvised, *Syrinx* included the remarkable 'Father Of Light', which sounds eerily like mid-90s Boards Of Canada, and the stunning, glacial 'Hollywood Dream Trip', which boasts one of the most sublime and tragic three-note sequences in pop history, one so poignant and beautiful it seems to unravel the secrets of the universe.

By the time the band was set to re-record the second album they were improvising less and compositions were stronger, making for a far more coherent and assured album than the debut. The blend of Moog and sax seemed a peculiar combination but miraculously sounded natural and organic. The most famous piece on *Long Lost Relatives* is 'Tillicum', which would go to score the band a chart hit in Canada, following heavy rotation as the theme tune for the long-running TV show *Here Come The Seventies*. "It was fairly adventurous of [CTV]. They filmed us us sitting out on a rock in the middle of Lake Ontario and the popularity of the show lifted it to #1 in several Canadian cities." The power of TV made 'Tillicum' one of the most unlikely chart hits ever – halfway between Cluster and the theme tune from *Rhubarb & Custard*.

'Field Hymn (Epilogue)' was a reworking of a song that had appeared on the debut album. It was the first Syrinx song that Mills-Cockell wrote. "I used it as a kind of climactic music for a play I was working on in Vancouver, but the version on *Long Lost Relatives* has by far the superior arrangement." The song was one of several utilised on a showpiece event for Canadian television which took place later the same year. *Stringspace* was a collaborative four-part suite between Syrinx and The Toronto Repertory Orchestra, led by Milton Barnes. The hour-long performance is still available on YouTube and provides rare footage of the trio at their peak. Around the same time, they opened for Miles Davis, then touring with his *Bitches Brew* line-up.

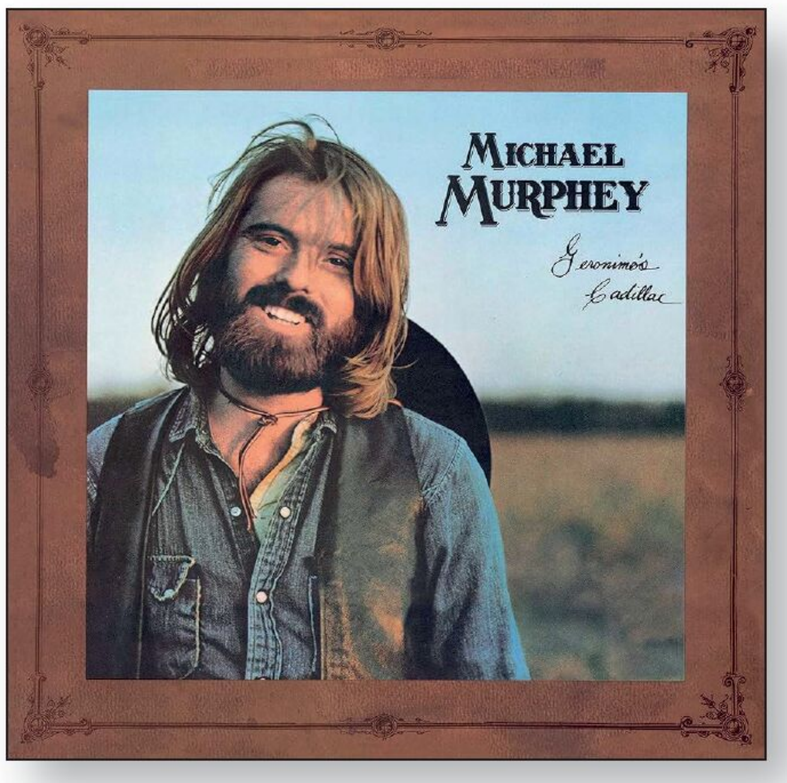
Another key track is the moody orchestral 'December Angel'. "It came to me in a dream. It was commissioned by a dancer called Ricardo, who ran The Toronto Dance Theatre. The choreography for the piece involved cables running from the four corners of the ceiling. They came down and elevated him into the centre in an angel shape, hence the title."

Other highlights included the schizoid creation 'Syren', which, after an Alan Wells-inspired intro conjuring visions of a lion tamer and his whip, employs a Hohner electric piano as it breaks into a funky gallop. Its more solemn passages eerily recall the tintinnabular compositions of Arvo Part. 'Tumblers To The Vault' (later the title of a career-spanning retrospective), meanwhile, prefigures Roxy Music's first album with its rhythmic intensity and space age sax/keyboard exchanges. 'Ibystix' is more abstract, although, as Mills-Cockell points out, it's "definitely a composition, but looser in structure, more primitive sounding". Its title sounds like something from the late '80s Detroit techno scene – it's little surprise to find out that Mills-Cockell experimented with the genre a few decades later.

The only vocals on the album are heard on the otherworldly closer 'Aurora Spinray'. "A friend of mine conducted the chorale for it, but the instrumentals seem to work better for people." Within the year of its recording, the three members of Syrinx had parted, keen to pursue other musical pathways, but they left behind two completely unique records, which ought to have received far greater attention at the time and deserve to do so today. Reference points aren't easy as the trio were genuinely forging new territory, with Mills-Cockell – who has made several solo albums subsequently and continues to perform today – identifying only Morten Subotnick (of *Silver Apples Of The Moon* fame) and (laughing) "possibly the social ambience of The Velvet Underground" as kindred spirits. Looking back, he remains typically modest of his own achievements. "It was simply luck. I managed to be able to record with Douglas and Alan Wells." S!

Michael Murphey and Bob Johnston at The Rubaiyat, Dallas, 1972
PHOTO: BOB LIVINGSTON

Murphey's Reservation



Inspired by a faded 1905 photograph to write a story of Native American repression and marry it to an irresistibly uplifting chorus, Texan songwriter Michael Murphey may have come up with the ultimate country protest song.

CHRIS GROOM checks under the hood of **'GERONIMO'S CADILLAC'**

The infamous photographic image shows Geronimo at the wheel of an automobile. Yet while his companions wear traditional Native American dress, the ageing Apache chief sports the more formal Western attire of waistcoat and top hat. Lamentably, this was pure US government propaganda; following his surrender to the state authorities in 1886, at the moment the shutter clicked, Geronimo was still imprisoned at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and only wheeled out (literally in this case) for press purposes at exhibitions and Wild West side shows. The once proud warrior was reduced to pandering to the crowd, to show how westernised he had become and his acceptance of the government's largesse to present him with a modern automobile. Interviewed in 1987 Michael Murphey remarked, "The two images together –

"Geronimo and a Cadillac – it was every irony I could ever think of about our culture in two words" Michael Martin Murphey

Geronimo and a Cadillac – just struck me as a song title. It was every irony I could ever think of about our culture in two words."

An early protagonist of the outlaw country movement alongside Jerry Jeff Walker and Willie Nelson, Murphey was already an activist for Native American civil rights when he co-wrote the song with Charles Quarto in '71. He could never have imagined that his beautifully simple yet directly critical song would go on to have an outlaw life of its own, initially banned in some states – including his home of Texas – where even by the early '70s some people clearly weren't ready for a song highlighting the mistreatment of "The American Indian".

Murphey had already tasted some success as a songwriter. Having played in a high school band with Mike Nesmith and Owen Castleman, when Papa Nez moved up to pop stardom and asked his old band mates to submit a song for The Monkees, Murphey and Castleman came up with 'What Am I Doing Hangin' Round?' for '67's *Pisces, Aquarius, Capricorn & Jones Ltd*. The songwriting duo briefly formed The Lewis & Clarke Expedition for one album, before Murphey decamped to California to write tracks for Bobbie Gentry and Kenny Rogers & The First Edition, whose double album *The Ballad Of Calico* is almost entirely composed by Murphey and Larry Cansler.

Moving back home, Murphey was playing The Rubaiyat, a small Dallas coffee house when he was spotted by producer Bob Johnston and invited to make a record in Nashville. The story goes that Murphey didn't recognise Johnston and when he asked the producer for some credentials, was stunned to hear him say, "Well, I worked with Bob Dylan on *Blonde On Blonde* and *Nashville Skyline*. And that live album that Johnny Cash made in prison? Yeah, I did that too." Murphey replied, "Okay, when do you want me in Nashville?", went straight home, packed his bags, borrowed his dad's Buick and was in Tennessee the next day, ready to work on his debut solo album.

Johnston took him to Studio A at Columbia and the recording process was surprisingly quick. "We lay down about 40 songs, just me and my bass player Bob Livingston," recalled Murphey, "and I said, 'Well, those are some nice demos, Mr Johnston, when are we gonna make the real album?' He said, 'I think you just did!'" Murphey happily headed back home, leaving the experienced producer to choose the final 10 or 12 tracks and add other instrumentation as he saw fit.

Released by A&M Records in '72, the album runs the full gamut of country, folk, blues and a touch of gospel. The moving story of 'Geronimo's Cadillac', featuring superb lead guitar from Leonard Arnold, was chosen as the title track and released as a single, eventually reaching the US Top 40 despite the occasional state boycott. Murphey also cut his own version of 'What Am I Doing Hangin' Round?' while 'Boy From The Country' was picked up by John Denver. "On the strength of his first album," proclaimed *Rolling Stone*, "Michael Murphey is the best new songwriter in the country."

Two years later, County Durham-born singer Claire Hamill fell in love with the song. Signed by Island at 17, Hamill was now a 20-year-old veteran cutting her third album *Stage Door Johnnies* in London, this time for the newly formed Konk Records run by Ray and Dave Davies and Claire's manager Tony Dimitriades. "Hoyt Axton's version was getting played in the UK and Tony suggested I record it," recalls Hamill. "I loved Ray Davies' production and you can hear him singing backing vocals in the 'whoo hoo' bit at the end." Claire's take on 'Geronimo's Cadillac' was chosen as the first single for the new label and received plenty of airplay, settling just outside the Top 40. As a result, she was introduced to the songwriter himself. "I toured the US with the album which was released on ABC Records over there. I played a gig in Denver and got to meet Michael at his house up in the mountains. He was a really sweet man."

Two other sympathetic recordings of the song came out in '74, with aforementioned country troubadour Hoyt Axton adding the song to his album *Life Machine*, while Johnny Rivers' more muscular cover featured sweet chorus harmonies from Linda Ronstadt. Of the other British covers, the '87 single by Manfred Mann's Earth Band is probably best forgotten, their bombastic approach wiping out any trace of subtlety and poignancy from Murphy's original. Scottish folk singer Dick Gaughan, a man often known to champion songs of social injustice, added it to his '96 album *Sail On*.

Understandably, singers with Native American heritage have taken the song under their wing. Part Cherokee on her mother's side, Cher took the song to her heart in '75. Warner Brothers put out the single, arranged and produced by Jimmy Webb, who certainly knows a good song when he hears one, probably hoping to recreate the success of #1 hit 'Half-Breed'. Unfortunately, the slower gospel arrangement and Cher's strident vocal overwhelmed the lyric and it failed to chart.

Singer and guitarist Bill Miller grew up on a Mohican reservation in Wisconsin, working throughout the '80s with the likes of Ritchie Havens, Arlo Guthrie and Nanci Griffith. An emotional staple of his live show, Miller's version is simpler but far more effective and featured on his '92 album *Reservation Road*.

In many ways, the song came full circle in '96 when The Lost Gonzo Band added it to their reunion album *Rendezvous*. Formed in the early '70s, these were the same musicians who originally pioneered the progressive Cosmic Cowboy scene centred around Austin, Texas. Starting out as an interchangeable studio/touring band for both Murphey and Jerry Jeff Walker, they worked on ground-breaking albums like *Geronimo's Cadillac* and *Cosmic Cowboy Souvenir*, as well as Walker's classic *Viva Terlingua* and *Ridin' High*.

At least two of the reformed Gonzos – bassist Bob Livingston and guitarist Gary P Nunn – had played on Murphey's original recording and their new version, all cool pedal steel and effortless Texan swagger, still retains an authentic touch of indignance in the vocals. S!

(Four-wheel postscript: Before the car enthusiasts among you write in, the vehicle in the original photograph is actually a 1904 Locomobile Model C. However, I think we can cut Michael Murphey some slack for such poetic licence…)

The Blues Project find their gentle side

Forecasting The Net

After being renamed from Verve Folkways in 1967 to stay in step with the changing times, **VERVE FORECAST** lasted just three years before it was retired by parent company MGM. Though its initial tenure was short-lived, beyond releases by the inimitable Richie Havens and Tim Hardin lies a largely hidden selection of wonderful psych, blues and soul treats from both US coasts and Canada, with Dylan producer Tom Wilson at the helm for many.

SEÁN CASEY assesses the catch

CHAPTER V
Headshrinker / Dolly's Magic
(April 1967)

After rechristening themselves from The Badd Cedes to avoid confusion with a group using the same name (not those ones), Canadians Chapter V issued just two singles, both with the same B-side. Released on Folkways in Canada with 'The Sun Is Green' as A-side, the single was separately issued on Forecast in the US, with the roaring 'Headshrinker' as the lead. Confusingly, it could easily be mistaken for a slice of Seeds-esque garage-rock. The silver tuna of their trio of songs, however, is common B-side 'Dolly's Magic', a wonderful harmony-driven psych-pop artifact. All were written, arranged and produced by Canadian Brian Ahern, who went onto produce (and marry) country-rock star Emmylou Harris. Too many seeds, man.

THE BLUES PROJECT
Gentle Dreams / Lost In The Shuffle
(September 1967)

Originally signed to Folkways by Tom Wilson following his move from Columbia, fluid collective The Blues Project released this one single on the rebranded Forecast. Written by Andy Kulberg, bassist and flautist behind The Beastie Boys' 'Flute Loop' riff, and future Blood, Sweat & Tears guitarist Steve Katz, 'Gentle Dreams' interestingly switches back and forth from Vaudeville-jazz to blues-based folk-rock. 'Lost In The Shuffle' was originally recorded by The King Bees and released a year earlier on RCA. Though neither song made it onto the band's next record *Planned Obsolescence*, both resurfaced on the 1997's *Anthology*.

TOMMY FLANDERS
Friday Night City / Reputation
(September 1967)

Recorded in LA in mid-1967, this flawless brace boasts an uncredited Frank Zappa on arrangements and guitar duties. While the line-up on the A-side's hip ode to LA nightlife – written by former Blues Project singer Flanders – remains

unknown, he and Zappa were reportedly joined by jazz pianist Gerald Wiggins, Wrecking Crew peripheral member and interim Electric Prunes guitarist Louis Morell, and troubled drummer Jim Gordon, for an unrecognisable version of Tim Hardin's 'You Got A Reputation' on the flip. Reputations indeed.

JACKIE FOLLETT
I Am What I Am / Don't Care To
(October 1967)

If obscure northern soul 45s with players on both sides are your thing, look no further. Clad with guitars, brass, organs, stomping drums, soulful female vocals and harmonies, 'I Am What I Am', in particular, ticks all the boxes. Both songs were written, arranged and produced by Galt MacDermot collaborator Rick Shorter. Follett's only other recording was another single produced by Shorter a year prior on MGM. After leaving the music industry, Follett went onto become an award-winning nature photographer, a profession in which she remains today.

THE PAUPERS
Think I Care / White Song
(December 1967)

Signed to Verve by manager and mogul Albert Grossman, Canadian band The Paupers performed this roaring fuzz-heavy A-side live at The Monterey Pop Festival in 1967 and opened for Jefferson Airplane earlier that year. Both sides were written by Skip Prokop and Scottish emigree Adam Mitchell, with a brass-led version of 'Think I Care' appearing on Third Bardo singer Jeffrey Monn's solo debut *Reality* in '68. Disbanding after two albums, multi-instrumentalist Prokop formed the Chicago-esque collective Lighthouse, with Mitchell moving into production and songwriting.

THE ORACLE
The Night We Fell In Love / Don't Say No
(December 1967)

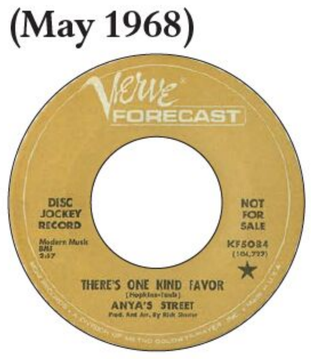
Named after a hippie newspaper in San Francisco, The Oracle were discovered by Music Machine bassist Keith Olson and produced alongside Curt Boettcher, a name likely to be familiar to most *Shindig!* readers. While the A-side of this solitary single is typical of the duo's upbeat charm of the time, the flip substitutes sunshine-pop for eastern-inspired vibes and haunting harmonies *a la* Brian Wilson. It was sung by Bill Whitten and written by a 16-year-old Ruthann Friedman, who also gave The Association their second hit 'Windy'. Unravelling soon after, Whitten and guitarist Ronnie Hamilton regrouped as Elfstone under the guidance of disgraced producer Kim Fowley. Boettcher and Olson forged ahead with their next project The Millennium.

"The album failed to sell upon its release in March '68, but has since become highly collectable, with the mystery surrounding its creator – akin to that of Rodriguez and Jim Sullivan – fuelling intrigue among web sleuths"

THE APPLETREE THEATRE
What A Way To Go / Lotus Flower
(March 1968)

Also cutting their teeth in Greenwich in the early '60s were Buffalo, New York-born brothers Terrance and John Boylan who formed The Ginger Men, an act blending rock 'n' roll with folk and blues. After landing a solo contract with MGM in late '67, Terrance recruited his brother alongside guitar virtuoso Larry Coryell, Grammy-winning jazz-player Chuck Israels, and a squad of session musicians to concoct the baroque-psych concept album *Playback*. Reportedly one of John Lennon's favourite albums of '68, it sold moderately well upon release before falling into the undergrowth. Two singles were issued with this being their final release as The Appletree Theatre a year later. In isolation, they fail to do justice to Boylan's holistic vision, 'What A Way To Go' exemplifies their introspective acid-folk with the delightful instrumental groover 'Lotus Flower' – complete with reverse tape effects – appearing on the flip.

ANYA'S STREET
There's One Kind Favor / Boeing 707
(May 1968)



Shorter also played a prominent role in this next single by Anya's Street, a group he discovered and produced after meeting singer, Anna "Anya Cohen" in a New York coffee shop. Centred around Cohen's vocals, the group was tipped as the East Coast equivalent of Jefferson Airplane. Upon hearing 'There's One Kind Favor', it's easy to understand why, though the group's take on Blind Lemon Jefferson's widely covered blues classic – originally known as 'See That My Grave Is Kept Clean' – clearly shows they had more to offer than similarities. The B-side is a fantastic riff driven blues-rock number written by Shorter. Both appear on the superb '68 LP *Street,* which also boasts a supremely odd Beatles/Dylan medley of 'If I Needed Someone' and 'Tomorrow's A Long, Long Time'.

HARUMI
Talk About It / First Impressions
(May 1968)

A fine example of Tom Wilson's desire to stretch the variety of the label's roster is the signing of Harumi Ando, a Japanese New Yorker whose solitary single was issued to promote his eponymous debut album. From the John Williams-esque rousing horns, to the flange-drenched drums, 'Talk About It' is a brilliant specimen of post-*Magical Mystery Tour* psych-pop with B-side 'First Impressions' displaying the songwriter's more delicate side. Incredibly, the album failed to sell upon its release in March '68, but has since become highly collectable, with the mystery surrounding its creator – akin to that of Rodriguez and Jim Sullivan – fuelling intrigue among web sleuths.

BARBARA KEITH
Fisherman King / Good Lovin' Man
(June 1969)

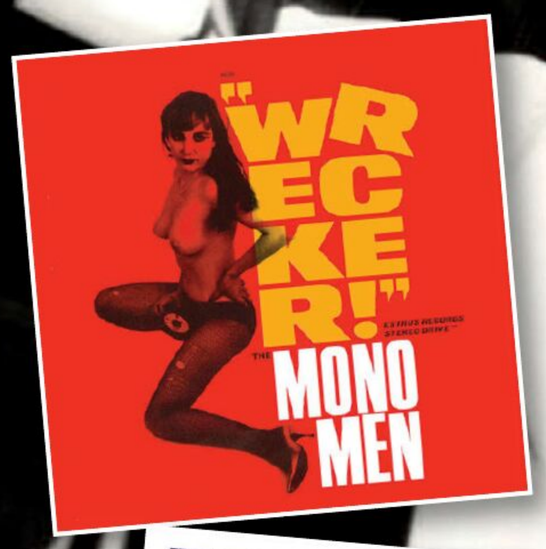
Emerging from the Greenwich Village scene after building a reputation through performances at Café Wha?, Massachusetts native Keith joined multi-instrumentalist (and now Democrat politician), John Hall in country/psych outfit Kangaroo. After going solo, Keith's debut single was arranged by pianist and future Nick Drake collaborator Paul Harris. Notwithstanding dubious lyrics and strings perhaps too high-up in the mix, the A-side is a great slice of orchestrated psych-pop. For those of you craving a more raw sound, Dutch singer Patricia Paay's rendition released the same year is the one to head for. S!

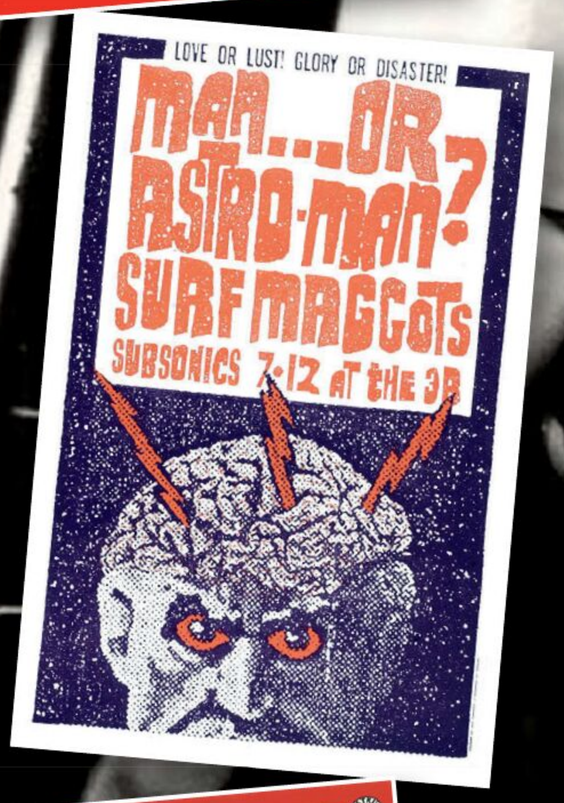
Takin' Out The Trash

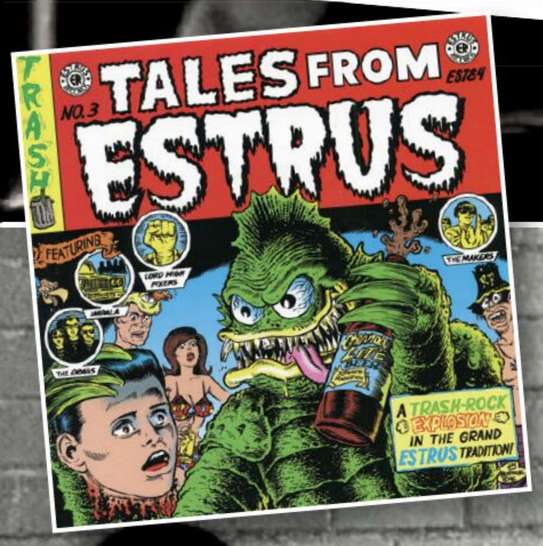
Establised in Bellingham, WA in 1987 by Dave Crider of garage-rockers The Mono Men, record label Estrus has grown into one of the great independent US labels, putting out countless LPs and 45s from underground titans like The Mummies, The Phantom Surfers, Supercharger, The Fall-Outs, The Makers, Teengenerate, The Mooney Suzuki, Man Or Astro-Man?, Thee Headcoats and on, all shot through with a trash aesthetic championed by main designer Art Chantry. Now the label is celebrated in a lavish new book, ***ESTRUS: SHOVELIN' THE SHIT SINCE '87,*** a rollicking ride through their history, chock full of original album covers, tour posters and band photos.

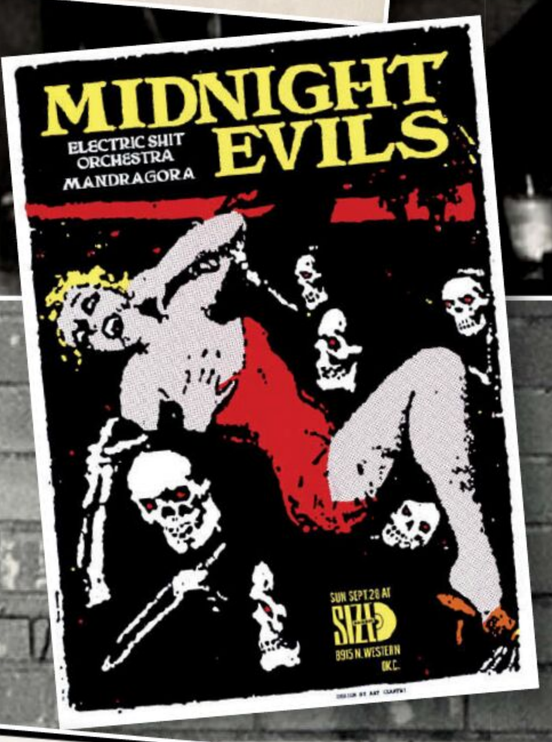
Let *Shindig!* share just a few nuggets of trash from this fitting testament to Estrus and all who rocked with her

The Mummies' Trent Ruane, photographed for the cover of the *Shitsville* EP, 1990









Top: The Coyote Men at Garage Shock Memorial Day, Bellingham, 1999, Bottom: Mooney Suzuki, *People Get Ready* photoshoot, PHOTO BY JESSICA ARP
Inset, from top: The Mono Men's *Wrecker!;* Man Or Astro-Man? 1995 gig poster, designed by Art Chantry; *Tales From Estrus No 3* EP; *Spicy Sizzlers* sampler ad, designed by Art Chantry; Midnight Evils Oklahoma City 2003 poster, designed by Art Chantry; The Mummies' *Death By Unga Bunga*, designed by Trent Ruane

Estrus: Shovelin' The Shit Since '87 by Chris Alpert Coyle & Scott Sugiuchi with Dave Crider & Art Chantry is published by Korero Press

20 questions

21st Century Ambassador

Jonathan Rado: Clowning about in the studio

As one half of Foxygen **JONATHAN RADO** made a raft of always interesting, and occasionally demanding, albums before becoming one of America's go-to maverick producers, working on soon to be classic albums with everyone from Weyes Blood and The Lemon Twigs to The Killers.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS learns about his musical baptism

A baby-faced teenage Rado, in love with The Doors; inset: rehearsing with Foxygen's Shaun Flemming, Bremen Theater, Copenhagen

Shindig!: Growing up in the Agoura Hills, you, Sam France, Shaun Fleming and Jackie Cohen were all theatrical teens. You said the production *Bubble Boy* was a massive influence on you. Did the love of music and theatre go hand in hand?

Jonathan Rado: I grew up in the '90s. When I was a child, it was all *Total Request Live*; an MTV show that Carson Daly hosted. It featured Limp Bizkit, Blink 182 and Britney Spears, the pop of the era. They would play the same 20 music videos over and over. That was what I was raised on. Once I met Sam France we got into '60s and '70s music at high school. Sam and I were in the same year, and Jackie is two years younger, Shaun is one year older. They all did theatre. I think I got into it because of them really. Shaun had talent and was really amazing at musicals. Sam is a great actor. I remember seeing him in*1984*, as the lead character. And he was absolutely brilliant. He also played Tobias in the school production of *Sweeney Todd*.

Bubble Boy was written by Cinco Paul. I went to school with his son, Alex. Cinco Paul was a screenwriter in Hollywood, which he has since gone on to take over. He does *The Despicable Me* movies now. At that point, he hadn't done those yet. His big movie was *Bubble Boy*, with Jake Gyllenhaal, which he adapted into a musical. He had a pretty good taste in music. The songs, although corny and for kids, were like Burt Bacharach. His favourite band was The Replacements. I had a very small part in the show, so I wasn't on stage a lot, and I would sit and watch him play piano. I learned a lot of technique and tricks by just watching him play chords. I knew the basics, but he would do add-ons and double octaves. That what was the most inspirational to me.

S!: You appeared on two of TV's most memorable series, *Community* and *Weeds*. What was the acting experience like?

JR: That was through *Bubble Boy*. My mom was a pharmacist and my dad made small parts for airplanes. I'm not from an entertainment family. We did an industry performance of *Bubble Boy* in an auditorium. I guess one of the people that came to that performance was casting an episode of *Weeds*. He saw me do my role, my little, small role, and said, "That kid will be perfect for the role I'm casting in *Weeds* as a stoner." This was during my senior year of high school. I did that episode of *Weeds* and then I got an acting agent. All these people started hitting me up, trying to represent me. I went on auditions for a year, and I hated it. I quit the acting, I quit the talent agency. Later that week the *Community* casting director sent me an email, it was the same one who had done *Weeds*, and they had another role for a stoner.

S!: You then studied screenwriting in New York. Is filmmaking something you'd like to go back to?

JR: At the end of high school, Sam went to Olympia, Washington for college. He went to Evergreen. I was left alone in Agoura. Jackie was away too. I was in a band with Shaun, and I just felt like I'd never leave my hometown. New York seemed like a place of big dreams. I had some friends that had gone, and they loved it. I was writing a lot of movie scripts, and legitimately in my heart I really wanted to make movies. I went to New York with the intention of becoming a screenwriter and just got derailed by Foxygen, and Sam dropped out of college. I then stopped caring as much about movies, and really, I don't think I had much to say at that point in my life. I'd still love to write a movie though, so who knows?

S!: Foxygen's music has always been on the experimental side – infused with many influences. When you started out as young teenagers, who was really floating your boat?

JR: The Brian Jonestown Massacre were probably the impetus for us starting Foxygen. Beck, The Flaming Lips, Adam Green, were the other big ones. Before Foxygen, we already had knowledge of all the biggest classic bands. We were raised on The Beatles. We knew all the popular '60s music. I think what BJM did was get us into more obscure *Nuggets* stuff.

There's a scene in *Dig!* where Anton's on his four-track making a song. I'd never really considered that's how professional music was made. That's what I would do in my room. I was like, "You don't need a drummer or a bass player? Wow! You don't really need to be in a band. All you need is a four-track. You don't need people." That was really freeing for both me and Sam. I don't think that playing live in a band was ever very exciting for us.

S!: You've cited producer Richard Swift as one of your biggest inspirations. He mixed Foxygen's *Take The Kids Off Broadway* and produced your breakthrough 2013 album *We Are The 21st Century Ambassadors Of Peace & Magic*. What would you say were his best qualities as a producer?

JR: The best experience I ever had with Richard was making *21st Century Ambassador*s. That was a fairly sober recording process. We had demoed everything, as we knew we had months leading up to it. So pretty much all we did – me and Sam lived together at the time – was talk about the album and plot how it was going to sound. We flew to California, saw our parents, brought some stuff from my parents' house, and drove up to Portland. We had really big ideas for the album, and he would take those big ideas and make them a reality. It seemed very complicated to make the album that we were trying to make.

Take The Kids Off Broadway took us a year. We recorded it on GarageBand. It consisted of hundreds of overdubbed tracks. We did *21st* in under 24 tracks. Swift made it seem so easy to make the album. Nothing was hard.

Russian Recording studio. Bloomington, IN, Foxygen get to work; insets: Rado as musician and "recording person"

We weren't sitting around for a long time while he was trying to get a sound. The idea was really exciting for me and made me want to produce and be a recording person. It was what me and Sam were were already doing in our room. He just did it in a more concise way.

I remember the first day we were recording with Richard. We did 'In The Darkness', the first track on *21st*. I played bass and Swift played drums. When we were listening back to the take, I said, "I don't know if the drums sound the way that I pictured them sounding in my head." "Dude, it's just drums," he said. "It's just drums. It's gonna sound great. Let it go." And of course, it was an amazing drum sound.

***S!*:** What led to you releasing solo album *Law And Order* in 2013?

JR: I was still in New York when *Law And Order* came out. Foxygen had been touring and were going to make *Star Power,* and we knew that *Star Power* was going to be a double album. We wanted it to be like *Tusk*. I had some stuff kicking around that I had made in my apartment on a Tascam eight-track. I was really into the Lindsay Buckingham solo album *Law And Order*. Lindsay put that out at the same time as *Mirage*. He had all these songs kicking around that didn't work for Fleetwood Mac. I had all these songs kicking around that I didn't think really worked for Foxygen. It was the same deal. So I called it that too.

I don't think I had big intentions of it doing anything. I liked putting out music. That was a very new for me. I wanted to treat it like a smaller thing. I didn't want people to think that the band was breaking up or I was going solo. I just had this stuff and wanted to put it out.

***S!*:** Sam doesn't hold back on stage – how did that affect you while performing?

JR: When he would get hurt, it was really terrifying. During the *Star Power* era they were really wild shows, but it was fairly controlled. At the time I wasn't thinking about it too much. I was glad to be in a band. It was exciting. I would see other bands just hold their guitars on stage and was so glad that Sam didn't do that. He had figured out a way not to hurt himself as badly, but it was still wild. I've been thinking about this a lot lately. I think that bands that have singers that don't play guitar or keyboards are way more exciting, no matter what.

***S!*:** What were your first impressions on seeing/hearing The Lemon Twigs?

JR: Brian sent me a tweet. "Hey Rado, would you like to produce our album?" I listened to their Bandcamp that they had sent me. They weren't called The Lemon Twigs yet. They were called Brian & Michael. It sounded to me like they were really into Tame Impala and MGMT. What stood out was that these kids were really good at singing. I liked the recordings that they had done on their computer. It just seemed like a no-brainer to me. I was looking for bands to produce and didn't have a huge name for myself at the time. It seemed low pressure and fun. I met with them; Michael was 14 and Brian was 16. I was 23.

We were touring *Star Power,* so I couldn't really make the album with them yet. During the time away, they decided to call themselves The Lemon Twigs, and we had them open a Foxygen show in New York at The Webster Hall. That was their first Lemon Twigs show. In the time period since we first spoke, they wrote all those songs. We talked about their influences, which were obviously at that point The Beach Boys, Beatles, Badfinger – all the B's. I was like, "Let's make your album like *Surf's Up*." I remember Brian sending me a demo of 'I Wanna Prove To You', the subject heading was "New Brian Wilson Song". I listened to it, "Is this a cover of a Brian Wilson song? Is this a Beach Boys song that I haven't heard?" I thought. "Did you write this?" I asked. And he said, "Yeah." It was truly one of the best songs I'd ever heard. It was in an incredibly inspired time period, and they

pumped out those songs in not a lot of time. That blew me away. Their musicianship was on a different level than me and Sam because me and Sam just taught ourselves everything.

***S!*:** You used these guys on the expansive *Hang* album and all manner of later production work. You obviously rate them as musicians and people. How're The Lemon Twigs to work with?
JR: If I could use anybody in the world, it's them. They're the absolute best. For *Hang* it was really perfect because they understood Foxygen in a way that I don't think anybody else would. They're my best friends, and so it feels fun, just fun to be able to continue to make albums with them. They are incredible musicians. I've found that if you're an artist that wants what they do, and wants to let them do what they do, you're gonna get an amazing product.

***S!*:** In 2017 you covered the whole of Bruce Springsteen's *Born To Run* album for Turntable Kitchen Records. What was it about the original album that made you want to cover it?
B: I just loved how epic it was. *Born To Run* is an amazing arrangement, with these sprawling songs. Springsteen never really went back to that. It was a theatrical album. I think that's why I chose it. I've always loved it. I remember buying it as a kid from Costco. I'm not sure how many people have heard my version. It's not what I am the proudest of.

***S!*:** Jonathan Wilson has done some amazing production work with Father John Misty, but you produced *God's Favourite Customer*. It has a very different feel to Wilson's epics; lighter and more easily digestible. How did this come about?
JR: I was doing a session with Adam Green, one of my heroes, and he had called in Josh to play drums. I was still in my old studio in my garage where we did *Do Hollywood* and *Star Power*. I guess Josh liked the vibe. At that point Jonathan Wilson had just started touring with Roger Waters and was gone for a long time. And Josh wanted to record, we clicked, and we made the album very quickly. That might be what made it different. I've never worked with Jonathan Wilson but adore his latest album *Eat The Worm*. I love how it's a diss record. It's got this bravado to it. I think with his work with Father John Misty, maybe it's more detailed and more intricate. With *God's Favorite Customer* we did three songs in a day. Josh would come over and he would have a little bit of a song done, and then I'd learn it on bass, and he'd play drums and we'd just record it. He'd do the vocal and then put on a few more things. And then it was done. It was probably one of the quickest records I've ever made.

I think Josh is one of our greats. It was so awesome making that record. And I'd love to make more records with him.

"There's a scene in *Dig!* where Anton's on his four-track making a song. I'd never really considered that's how professional music was made. That's what I would do in my room. You don't really need to be in a band. All you need is a four-track"

Lost in music: Jonathan Rado and Richard Swift mixing *21st Century Ambassadors Of Peace & Magic*

***S!*:** Your wife Jackie Cohen's 2019 album *Zagg* was co-produced by you and Matthew E. White. What was it like working with him and the Spacebomb house band? How do his methods differ from yours?
JR: Doing that record with Matt was interesting. We had done demos for Jackie's album, maybe a year before we recorded it, so we had lived with those for a while. That's why Space Bomb signed her. It was a little bit challenging recording there because I felt really attached to the original demos. How does Matt differ from my working method as producer? I think that they are all very well-trained at Space Bomb. I come from just being self-taught. Loose, like rock 'n' roll. If you play with the right emotion, it's gonna get there. They're not that way, they're a band that plays together tightly. They want the bass and drums to sit together flawlessly. I think they're one of the best groove bands in the world. It worked well and was a lesson for me.

***S!*:** Does Foxygen's apocryphal *Seeing Other People* really mark the end? Will you and Sam ever work together again?
JR: Sam's like my brother. And there are points in your life, I guess, where you maybe need a break from your brother. But I don't think they ever stop being your brother. In my mind, you haven't seen the last of Foxygen. When we set out, early on, we knew the albums we wanted to make. We wanted to make a '60s rock album. We wanted to make a wild double album; one with an orchestra, and then like a coffee shop, adult album. *Seeing Other People* was initially called *Java City*. We had that idea for a long time.

There was a lost one that we started in 2020. Hopefully it will come out one day. I don't even know how to describe it. It's more like a *Star Power 2*, but less song-based. It's just craziness. There is also a song we made in 2019 called 'Sports'. It's like '24 Hour Lover Man'. The rap one. That was the only stand-alone single that we ever did. I don't know how it even came about. Sam wrote this rap, and he wanted it to be over 'Manic Depression' by Jimi Hendrix. We found a bootleg recording of it. It's not the actual *Are you Experienced*? one. We were getting into old

"What is even happening or how we even got to the end result on those Weyes Blood records is hard to classify. It's a good team that we have. It's hard and it's easy at the same time. It's weird"

samplers and stuff.

Foxygen were never just a band. I think that's where we went wrong actually. We tried to be a real band. And we were not a real band. We were a recording project, not that we weren't a good band. We were just not a *real* band. Our line-ups were always different. Our ideas were very grand, much grander than a normal four-piece band.

S!: Artists, producers, bits of gear that have continually inspired?

JR: My favourite is Brian Eno. He's at the top of the list. His freedom in the studio and his freedom in his life and work is continually inspiring. I love everything he does. He's someone I discovered in college during my freshman year. I heard *Here Come The Warm Jets*, which is an amazing place to start. You know, right at the beginning. I knew Roxy Music, but I didn't know the Eno solo catalogue. I really went down a rabbit hole with the gear that he used. Those things are pretty amazing… the Eventide H 3000 or the EMS Cynthia, they are unbeatable. I have a Lang EQ that brings out wonderful frequencies in a microphone. You can put anything through it. It sounds amazing. I love a piano or a drum set. I think I've always been more interested in instruments and the quality of the instruments than the gear recording them.

I didn't go to technical school, but I know how to make something sound good. Now that I've used enough really, really expensive gear and cheap gear, I understand the functionality of what it all does. I understand what a compressor does and an expander and an EQ, all these things. I love little tricks, running delays into echoes, into reverbs. And that's kind of the Eno thing too, just using what you have and manipulating it to create something new.

S!: Your work on Weyes Blood's major breakthrough albums mixed vintage synths with orchestration and singer-songwriter motifs but sounded entirely new. What did Natalie, you and the team draw on collectively?

JR: I really think of myself as an Eno figure on the Weyes Blood albums. My main thing for those albums was I wanted the playing to be as perfect as possible. We got The Lemon Twigs, and on *And In The Darkness Hearts Aglow*, there's Joey Waronker and Sebastian Steinberg. We called in amazing players. I also really thought about treatments, because I hear a lot of music that is recorded the same way nowadays. Everyone's picked up the same kind of tricks and figured out how to do it; probably because of the internet and how that information is widely available now. I think everyone's got better in the 2000s, but it all sounds alike.

For Natalie's music it's so otherworldly that it shouldn't sound the same as anything else. With this new one, we recorded it in East West Studio three, where they did *Pet Sounds* and The Mamas & The Papas, all the old Wrecking Crew records. When we took the recordings back, they sounded so clean. They did not sound like those old recordings. It all sounded very modern, so I thought a lot about tape loops and ways to treat the sounds that we captured so they were not stock. There's a lot of Frippertronics with the Weyes Blood set up. There were a lot of little toys, a lot of running things through other things. We didn't use anything modern. We recorded on tape and then transferred to the computer and ran stuff in and out through the computer. But, in a way, those records are incredibly modern. Natalie writes such strong material that her sound is very hard to pin down. What is even happening or how we even got to the end result on those Weyes Blood records is hard to classify. It's a good team that we have. It's hard and it's easy at the same time. It's weird.

S!: What are your favourite projects you've produced and why? How do you work as a producer – are you very hands on or are you a sit back and let the artists play kind of guy?

JR: I love the Weyes Blood albums. I love The Lemon Twigs albums, and I love Foxygen and the last Killers' album that I worked on. *Pressure Machine* is one of my favourite things that I've ever done. I am extremely adaptable. The Killers are a totally different world. I worked with Shawn Everett and I played a lot of the instruments on those albums. I'm more of a musician-producer, but on the Weyes Blood albums, I'm not playing that much. I play bass a little bit, but I suss out what people need from me. On every project, the musicians show up, I talk to them a little bit. If it's a band, I'm probably not playing that many instruments. If it's a solo artist, I'm probably playing more instruments and getting more hands on with the arrangement. I let people tell me what they need from me, you know? It's always different. I only get involved if there's something wrong. But

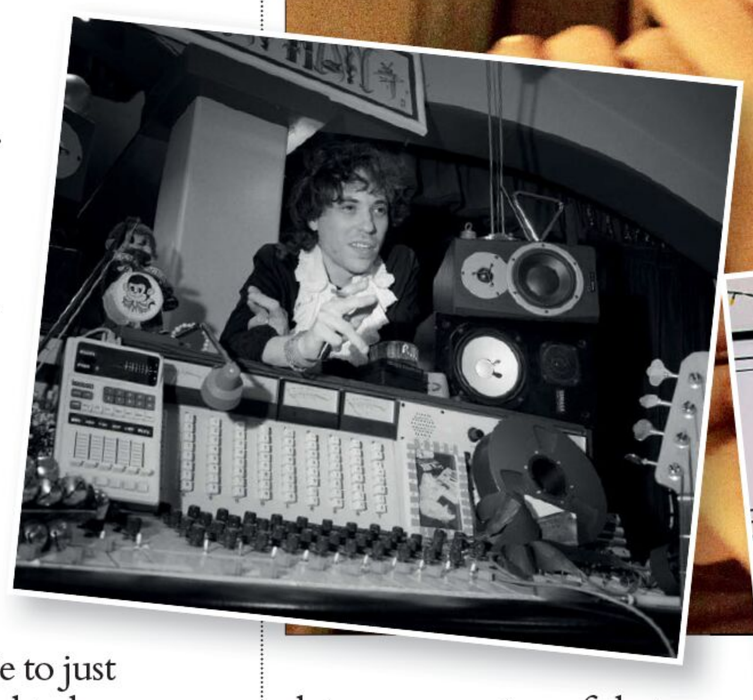
Rado the guitarist; insets: Sam France and Rado press shot;in the studio, 2016
PHOTOS: NICKY GIRAFFE / CARA ROBBINS

Jonathan the studio mastermind; with The Lemon Twigs' Brian D'Addario (below right)
PHOTO BY CARA ROBBINS

if everything's sounding good, then I will just sit back and let them play. On those sessions, I tend to do more work sonically. For Weyes Blood albums, I'm in the control room focusing on the sounds. The players are already really good. They don't need me to tell them what to do. If anything, Natalie will tell them what to do. I'm in charge of the sounds.

S!: A number of collaborators, the mentioned Lemon Twigs and Weyes Blood, have worked on other albums you have produced. Have you brought them in with you as a mini–Wrecking Crew? Do you find working with a key set of musicians and performers an integral part of the process?
JR: Over the years, probably the Twigs and Natalie and her gang are my favourites.

With The Killers, it felt right for *Imploding, The Mirage*. We got Lindsay Buckingham on as a guest too. That album features guests galore. It had KD Lang as well, and so many featured players on it that it just felt right to have Brian play the acoustic guitar and Natalie sing back up to keep the standard high. In that world, it works to have those big screen cameos.



I feel less inclined to ask Natalie to just sing on anybody's album. I tend to keep my favours close and only cash them in when it's a big deal. With The Lemon Twigs, I only call them in if I really think it's gonna be right. They bring the tightest rhythm section. I don't call them in if someone's trying to do the '80s, '90s or 2000s; they're not "modern". The thing about The Lemon Twigs is you can't force them to be something else. When I work with them, I just let them do what they do. And that's how you get the best product out of them.

S!: In the past few months you have issued a new recording by yours and Jackie's synth-pop collaboration Café Fear. What're some of your personal inspirations in this field?
JR: Well, the first one we put out, which was called *Carousel*, is more '80s. I was thinking about The Cure. And then we have a song called 'Torch For The Torturer', which I think we were just trying to do like Sophie, PC music. That's supposed to be really modern, like hyper pop. I got this synth called the Elektron Mono Machine, which Sophie used to make all of her music on. I was messing around with it, and I made that whole track on it.

When we were playing shows for Jackie's new album *Pratfall*, we were doing the shows with just the two of us. I had made drum machine versions of a bunch of her songs on a sample pad with synth backing tracks. We were thinking about Alex Cameron, and how he was able to tour so economically. We were doing our version of that.

S!: Have you kept up to speed with the new generation of bands in LA, spurred on by The Lemon Twigs? Rock 'n' roll is still well and truly alive.
JR: I love Uni Boys and I love their new album produced by The Lemon Twigs. Another one of my favourites is Dagger Polyester. I worked a little bit on their album. Yeah, there is a new LA rock scene, but I'm not as involved with it. The Lemon Twigs really took the mantle from Foxygen and are carrying on the legacy.

S!: Your new album, *For Who The Bells Toll For*, is just out. It sounds like Rado having a lot of fun, working with key influences of old. What led to the 10-year gap from your previous album? What's changed in that time?
JR: Big question. What has changed? God, I don't know. I mean, everything has changed. I've completely changed. My career has changed from being someone in a band to being someone that's working primarily behind the scenes. Richard Swift is dead. It's almost too much to even sum up.

I think that this new solo album is my first real solo album. I made it in a very Brian Eno style. I would go into the studio with nothing written. I didn't write any of the songs in advance. I would just go in and create in the studio with the tape rolling. It was a new way of working for me. I'd never really done that before because I'd never had the luxury to work that way. In the process of making the album, a close friend of mine, Danny Lacy died, and Richard Swift had died before that. Those were two very big moments. They were the first big deaths in my life, and this album was my way of processing that. I made a lot of songs for it and compiled it down to what I thought were the most potent seven. A lot has changed. It's the first time that I felt lyrically confident in what I was saying.

I tried to make more solo albums over the years. I made one with Richard Swift actually, that never came out, a full album. It's just sitting on my hard drive. I didn't like the way I was singing, and I didn't like the lyrics. I thought that the backing tracks were cool, but I rushed it. I felt embarrassed by it, and I never put it out, but listening back to it now, it is good. I think I will eventually put some of that stuff out.

I'm really proud of *For Who The Bells* though, and I can put my name on it without feeling embarrassed. The Lemon Twigs played on it, and other talented friends. S!

Contributors: Camilla Aisa, Duncan Fletcher, Sarah Gregory, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Thomas Patterson

For Who The Bells For is out now on Western Vinyl

"It wasn't wrong in those days to be considered excellent." Barbara Moore makes her voice heard, mid-60s

Shades of Gray

*Whether **BARBARA MOORE** was singing, writing, arranging or striving to be heard in a male-dominated industry, she excelled at everything she did and left her fingerprints all over cornerstones of the jazz, pop, easy-listening and library scenes of the '60s and '70s.*

***DAVID PEARSON** casts an appreciative ear over Moore's legacy*

It's 1968 and a recording session has been booked into EMI's huge Studio 1 for an album by a singer called Deena Webster. The gathering of experienced session musicians is awaiting the arrival of the supervising arranger. In walks a young woman dressed in a pink crepe mini-skirt and Courrèges leather boots. She is known to them as a member of vocal trio The Ladybirds, and they ask her where the other two girls are. Nervously, she tells them she's not there to provide vocal backing but to take charge of the sessions with the arrangements she has prepared. Her announcement is greeted with guffaws of derision from the all-male musicians. Nevertheless, she makes a start. She raises her baton. But her hand is shaking, and it flies out of her grip and thuds down on the big bass drum. The atmosphere immediately lightens, and things get underway. She guides the players through her carefully prepared folk-rock arrangement of 'Scarborough Fair'. There's a pause – a momentary silence – then all 60 musicians get to their feet and applaud and hug her.

The woman in question is 35-year-old Barbara Moore and, many years later, well into her 80s, she would declare that moment "beat marriage, giving birth, everything – it was the most beautiful few minutes in 80 years". This anecdote is important for two reasons. Firstly, it illustrates quite pointedly the chauvinistic attitudes that prevailed within the male-dominated sector of music production; a female session musician was hard to find in the '60s and backing vocalists tended to be omitted from credits on singles and albums, certainly in the early days.

Secondly, it marks a turning point in Barbara's story, a transition from backing vocals and session work to music arranging and production. Moore had already released her own piano album *A Little Moore Barbara* two years earlier, but that day in '68 kickstarted an amazing musical journey as a composer, arranger and producer. She'd be fired from The Ladybirds by the bespectacled Maggie Stredder for being "too ambitious". That ambition would lead her to a career that encompassed TV themes, film soundtracks and artists as diverse as Elton John, The New Seekers, Roger Webb and Françoise Hardy, as well as a lengthy spell with the De Wolfe music library. And yet through it all she would remain almost completely unknown to the public outside the music and recording world.

Shindig! readers will probably have heard her work without realising it. She sang with Dusty Springfield; she composed the theme tune to Terry Wogan's TV show; she arranged the vocals on The New Seekers' hit 'I'd Like To Teach The World To Sing' and the jazzy revamp of the *Pick Of The Pops* theme tune 'At The Sign Of The Swinging Cymbal', used in the BBC Radio 2 series since Alan Freeman's days. And way back in the early '60s, a new ATV adventure series starring Roger Moore was launched. *The Saint* would begin each episode with a theme tune that began with an ethereal solo voice rising to top C and accompanied by a jazz trumpet. That voice belongs to Barbara Moore. Just how did this wild and unpredictable ride come about?

Born in 1932 to musical parents, Barbara studied jazz piano. Dad worked with noted bandleader Joe Loss. "He became my godfather. I always said dad, if you died, I'd have been brought up Jewish. And then I'd have become an even better musician than I am now."

Her parents' divorce scuppered her university plans and she travelled to India, fetching up at the Taj Mahal Hotel as resident pianist. Health issues forced a return to England and a spell with The Dudley Moore Trio, working in London's Kings Road for 10 shillings a night. Then followed a position with The Ladybirds. She formed The Barbara Moore Singers, regularly performing with them on BBC's *Top Of The Pops*. She provided backing for Jimi Hendrix's 'Hey Joe' among countless others, and recalled one occasion when she came upon him near the BBC canteen, looking painfully thin. She duly bought him a shepherd's pie.

At various points during the decade she was also in The Breakaways and (perhaps surprisingly) the US-based Anita Kerr Singers. She was second voice to Anita and regularly travelled with her to Amsterdam to for TV recordings. And then – in a forerunner of what would happen with The Ladybirds – she lost her job. "At a certain point," Barbara recalled, years later, "Dear Anita, who was a wonderful jazz pianist, arranger and vocal group writer, discovered that I did exactly the same thing. So rather sadly she said she couldn't have someone in the group with the same leanings as herself, and so I had to go."

Moore provided backing vocals for Dusty Springfield alongside the likes of Kiki Dee, Madeline Bell and Lesley Duncan, and supported Sandie Shaw's winning 'Puppet On A String' at Eurovision in '67.

Like other backing singers, Moore travelled from one assignment to another, as many as three a day and sightreading the songs she was to sing. She would arrive on time for each session, do the business and move on, perhaps puffing on one of her favourite cigarettes as she moved around. It was steady reliable work, if not exactly over-lucrative – six guineas was pretty much the going rate during the '60s.

She found time to record her first album, the jazzy *A Little Moore Barbara* in '66. Meanwhile *The Saint* had become a hugely successful TV show and Barbara's vocal – recorded in three takes for which she was paid the statutory fee of £60 – would prove to be the gift that kept on giving. "The repeat royalties from those few minutes in a little cubicle helped to bring up my little girl to womanhood."

In '70 she arranged the backing choir on Elton John's 'Border Song' as well as working on the *Hot Hits* compilation series of albums. Throughout the '70s she was everywhere, yet she was also nowhere, her face and name were largely unknown and unrecognised.

Moore naturally found herself working with De Wolfe, the library music production company. She was one of a number of composers who provided original music for De Wolfe to record and produce, matching the exact requirements of the client, who might be from the TV, film or advertising worlds.

Barbara contributed to releases by The Roger Webb Sound, including the cherished double-whammy of *Moonshade* and *Vocal Patterns*. Mike Roberts, arranger and frontman for Mike Flowers Pops, singles out Moore's vocals on these albums. "That open voice, with minimal vibrato – there's a fragility to it. It's a mixture of the jazz and British folk tradition."

Madeline Bell, Lesley Duncan and Moore (right) provide backing for Dusty Springfield; Moore and 1966's jazzy solo debut *A Little Moore Barbara*

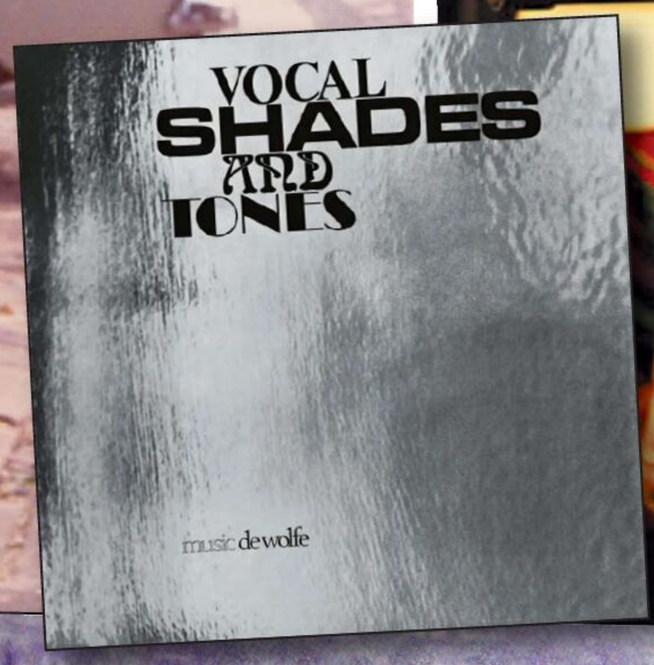
> *"I don't have a favourite. If you're doing library music you're very lucky to be doing it, because you get a variety of things all the time. You just get a nice list and your time limit. Trouble is, you never have time to think about anything"*

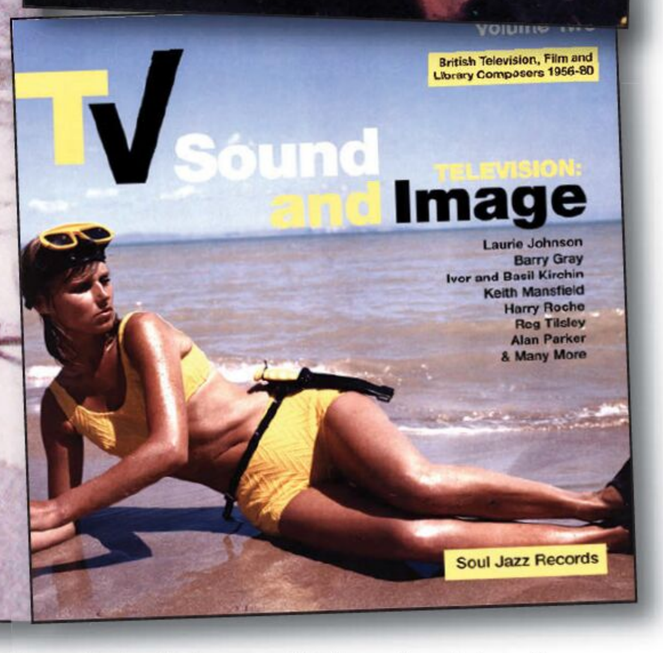
And following these albums she got the chance to make her own. *Vocal Shades And Tones* was the result and has become a highly sought-after album amongst crate diggers. Each piece was written for eight voices and accompanying orchestra/group. Creating library music is demanding, and some years ago Barbara explained to an audience the creative process involved. "With De Wolfe you would get a list of feelings, emotions, situations, locations – suicide, broken love affair, military – to which you had to do a three-minute piece of music. You were given an orchestra size, jazz or rock group, and voices. I would have two boys, two girls (I was one of them). You'd go in with 12 titles to do, and three sessions totalling eight hours or so, all in one day! 10am to 1pm. Fifteen minutes for the trumpet players to get drunk, then 2pm to 5pm, and the evening 7 to 10. Because of the sheer musicianship of top-quality players, they would read through their parts once and get every title done with time to spare. Then we would double-track, giving us the eight voices."

Described on De Wolfe's website as "Barbara Moore's groovy vocal cult classic," *Vocal Shades And Tones* contains 14 short compositions that run the stylistic gamut of the day. 'Hot Heels' has a "bright driving movement"; 'Steam Heat' has "exotic, tropical, sinister overtones", 'Shades-Tones' is "slow and moody"; 'Fly Paradise' is "beaty and carefree".

Asked in later years what her favourite mood music was, she said she had none. "I don't have a favourite. If you're doing library music, you're very lucky to be doing it, because you get a variety of things all the time. You just get a nice list and your time limit. Trouble is, you never have time to think about anything." Among her other album work is a brace of releases by Keith Roberts' Birds 'n' Brass: *Soundsational* and *Birds 'n' Brass Are Back*, on both of which she contributes vocals and scat.

Barbara was always full of admiration and praise for the musicians she worked with. Whereas now technology means a button on a control desk can correct a faulty note, it wasn't so then. "What you hear on these early tracks," she explained, "is a one-off performance after perhaps one or two tries to get your part right, to get the phrasing and the emphasis on certain words correct. I cannot praise enough and be prouder than having been part of that period of such incredible talent. It wasn't wrong in those days to be





Moore in 1968 during her tenure with The Anita Kerr Singers, which also included Johnny Evans and Guy Fletcher (right); Moore's arrangement of TV's *Terry Wogan Show* theme; '72's *Vocal Shades And Tones*; '70's *Sensational Birds 'n' Brass*; Moore continues to entrance her audience in 2021

considered excellent. And what we have today," Moore concludes, "is mediocrity doctored by technology."

Barbara enjoyed a lifetime friendship with jazz pianist and comedian Dudley Moore (no relation) and she worked with him and Peter Cook on the soundtracks of *Bedazzled* and *30 Is A Dangerous Age, Cynthia*. Her other movie contributions included *Modesty Blaise*, *The Ruling Class*, *The Deer Hunter* and *Indiana Jones And The Raiders Of The Lost Ark*. She was also friendly with film composer John Williams having worked with him over many years. At one point he offered her a job in Hollywood, but she turned it down as she had a young daughter to raise.

Barbara Moore remained active into her 80s, a popular and entertaining raconteur as she reflected on a life in music. And she would talk to audiences about the business of composition, eager to dispel the romantic image of a composer wandering about a garden listening to birdsong for inspiration.

"It's a sweaty and back-breaking job. It's just you, imagining the scene, having a look at lyrics and thinking, this tune would go well there. In my case, it's done sitting at a piano, and playing something. You think that sounds good, so you stand up, lean over the piano and scribble down on a piece of manuscript paper what you've written. And so on it goes. It's up and down, sit and stand. And having done it for about 11 years of my life, it takes quite a long time to recover physically from repetitive motion. In my case I couldn't, so I retired at the advanced age of 41, bought a chateau in the middle of France and left a shattered wreck, and have existed ever since."

Barbara Moore operated in a very male environment. In an interview some years ago for Radio Solent she referred to a compilation album released in 2012 called *TV Sound And Image*. "It's a double album featuring all the great television and cinema theme tunes for the '60s, '70s and '80s. There were 36 tracks – I went down the list. Three from the bottom is Barbara Moore. One female amongst 35 men."

Moore somehow never received the acclaim and fame that she deserved. Upon her death in 2021 after a long illness, her granddaughter Clare described her as "a pioneer of females in the music industry". S!

With thanks to Lorraine Bowen

Vocal Shades And Tones by Barbara Moore and Moonshade by The Roger Webb Sound are out now on Be With

"The impossible missing link between Sun Records snarl and The British Invasion's finest songsmiths." American dreamer Dwight Twilley in 1982

DEKE RIVERS And The QUARRYMEN

DWIGHT TWILLEY blazed into the US Top 20 in 1975 with blue-collar powerpop anthem 'I'm On Fire' before carving out a 50-plus-year career that was only halted by his tragic death in October 2023. PHIL SUGGITT looks back on the body of work and inspiration left behind by the much-missed artist

On October 2023, Dwight Twilley, aged 72, died following a stroke while driving his car near his home in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In a sad twist of fate, *Shindig!* requested an interview with Dwight in the same week. It wasn't to happen. If the name Dwight Twilley makes little impression on you, we strongly suggest that before you read on you go to your favourite music source and listen to *Sincerely*, The Dwight Twilley Band's first album. Or, failing that, any Twilley music up to and including his last studio album, 2014's *Always*, or *The Tulsa Years* compilation, as his output has remained of a remarkably consistent quality over the years. If you aren't then convinced that Dwight was one of the great early creators of powerpop, in the same class as Tom Petty, Big Star, The Raspberries and the like, then allow us to work on you.

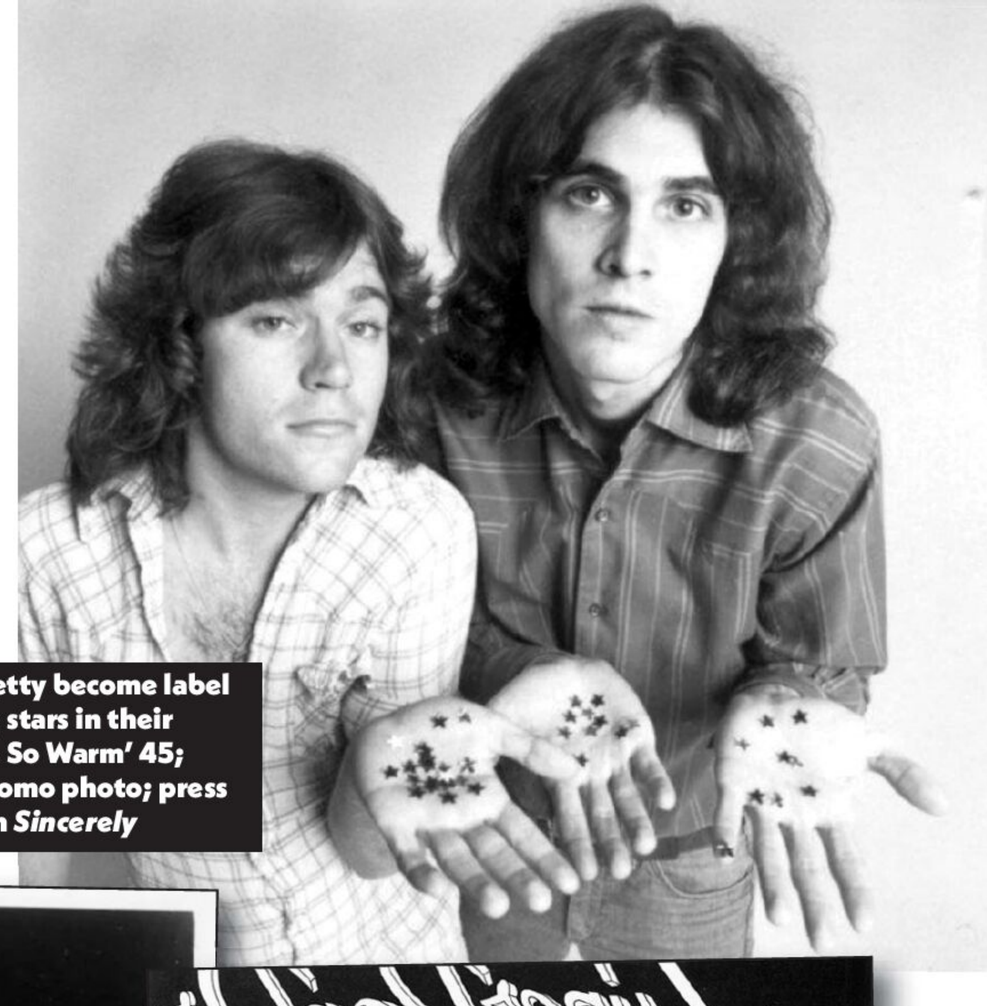
Phil Seymour and Dwight Twilley catch fire

The uncredited designer who produced the stylish lettering on the cover of The Dwight Twilley Band's 1975 debut single 'I'm On Fire' replaced the "tittles" – the dots of the letter I's – with stars. He was not the only person in the mid-70s who saw a bright star-studded future for the group; *The San Francisco Chronicle* regarded the song as "maybe the most exciting single by an American rock band ever". The success of their first release caused *Earth News* to write "There aren't many rock bands that can truly be called overnight sensations, but The Dwight Twilley Band fit the description perfectly." From seemingly out of nowhere the band rocketed into the US charts without any significant promotion or touring, reaching #16 and appearing on *American Bandstand*. A year later *Rolling Stone* proclaimed *Sincerely* "the best debut album of the year", yet lasting mainstream success eluded them.

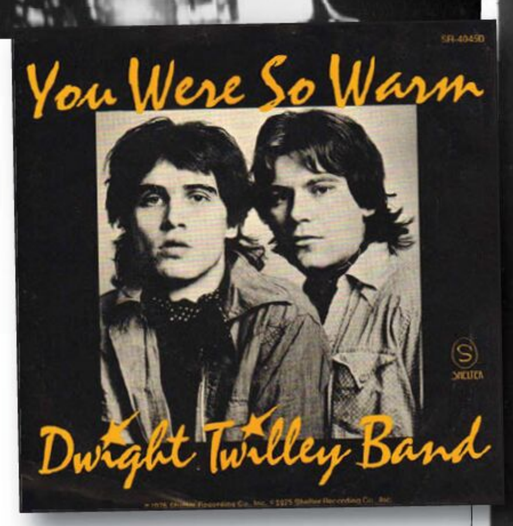
Few people realised that the Twilley band had been playing and recording together for at least eight years before their first single release. They were in fact a duo; singer, songwriter, guitarist and keyboardist Twilley and his friend Phil Seymour on drums, bass and vocals. In '76 interviews they mentioned that they had met and bonded in '67 at *A Hard Day's Night* matinee screening in Tulsa. At the time this writer naively imagined scenes of Dwight hearing Phil, a stranger, harmonising perfectly with Lennon and McCartney and deciding on the spot that they needed to play together. The reality was a little less dramatic. The pair were already acquaintances at Edison high school and had been introduced by a mutual friend. Although Beatlemania had conquered huge swathes of the US, most of their classmates didn't share their enthusiasm, but Phil and Dwight were inspired. Phil was impressed that 16-year-old Dwight had already written dozens of Beatles-inspired songs, and they quickly started to record together. At first, they played all the instruments, calling themselves "Oister", as in "two halves make a whole". They recorded numerous songs on one of the first commercially available TEAC home tape recorders, many of which were finally remastered and released in 2017. They reveal a marvellous, almost ethereal close harmony vocal blend, reminiscent of the Everlys. In 1973 they included another friend, Bill Pitcock IV, a gifted lead guitarist who went on to play on many of Dwight's records until his death in 2011. Bill's grandfather let them convert a room above Pitcock Electric into a small studio, earning the name "The Shop", in which they recorded hundreds of demos during the first half of the '70s.

Legend has it that Dwight and Phil didn't have the money to tout their demos to the far away music hubs of LA and New York, so they opted to head towards Nashville in Dwight's old Chevrolet. On impulse they stopped at the first record studio they passed, Sun Records in Memphis, where they impressed Sam Phillips' son, Jerry. In several interviews both Dwight and Phil claimed to be so naïve that they didn't appreciate the importance of Sun in the history of rock 'n' roll, but, given their love of Elvis, they must have had some idea. Jerry referred them to ex-Sun rockabilly artist Ray Harris, who ran the Hi label (later the home of Al Green) and a studio in Tupelo, Mississippi. Harris shared Phillips' enthusiasm for the duo, but thought their sound needed toughening up. Allegedly he told them "Y'all sing like pussies!" Dwight credited Harris with giving their sound a healthy infusion of rockabilly raunch. In an interview with *The Oklahoman* in '99 Dwight stated, "The one thing that set the Twilley Band aside from the other pop-type acts is that we got the rockabilly/Sun edge and combined it with the Beatles thing." Dwight's friend Kent Benjamin, who engineered some of the early recordings, thought the band evolved into "the impossible missing link between Sun Records snarl and The British Invasion's finest songsmiths". One of the most apt descriptions of Twilley's proto-powerpop is a line from Dwight's song 'Dancer', which refers to "Deke Rivers with The Quarrymen", Deke being the name of the character in one of Elvis' favourite movie roles, and The Quarrymen being the early Beatles.

Phil and Dwight both later admitted that in their youthful inexperience they didn't realise that signing with a major record company was usually a difficult and challenging process.They took it all in



Twilley and Tom Petty become label mates and friends; stars in their hands?; 'You Were So Warm' 45; Shelter Records promo photo; press ad for debut album *Sincerely*



their stride when, a mere week after they arrived in LA in '75, producer Denny Cordell was sufficiently impressed by their tape to sign them to Shelter Records. By a strange coincidence Shelter also had an office in Tulsa, as the label was co-owned by Tulsa's most admired musician, Leon Russell. Cordell and Russell encouraged the band to return to Tulsa and work in Leon's state of the art facility, The Church Studios. At this point Cordell decided that the band should change their name. "Dwight Twilley is too good a name not to use," he said, (although a certain Reg Dwight may not have agreed with him.) There was some logic to naming the band after the songwriter, but the decision would be a major reason for a parting of the ways in '78. In the letter or remembrance at Phil's funeral Dwight said, "I'll never forget the cold November night at the Church Studios in Tulsa. Phil and I had just signed our first recording contract. We had been instructed by the record company to get acquainted with working in a 'real' 16-track studio and not to record a 'real' record. In the confusion of a pivotal moment, it was Phil who pulled me into a secluded hallway and said 'Dwight, let's make a hit record right now'. That night we recorded 'I'm On Fire'."

"Phil pulled me into a secluded hallway and said *'Dwight, let's make a hit record right now'*. That night we recorded 'I'm On Fire'"

The song had only been written the week before. Critics loved it and so did the public; it quickly rose to #16 in the US charts. There was an initial burst of critical enthusiasm for the newcomers. "Is the time right for The Dwight Twilley Band to become the new super-pop phenomenon?" asked *Phonograph Record* magazine. Although Pete Townsend had described The Who's music as "powerpop" in '67, the term was not in general use until the end of the '70s. Twilley went on to become widely acknowledged as one of the major influences on the genre, "a progenitor of powerpop". Tellingly Grapefruit's new '70s American powerpop compilation takes its title *Looking For The Magic* from a stand-out song on '77's second album *Twilley Don't Mind*.

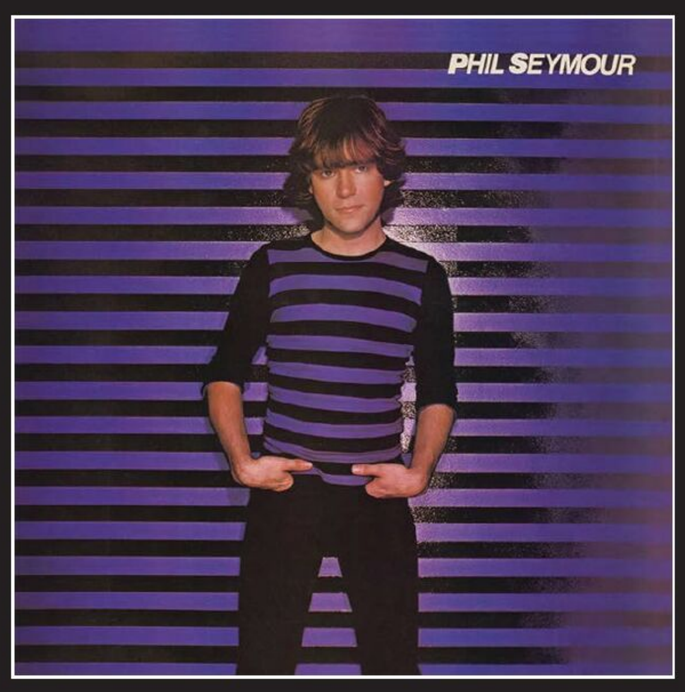
The logical next steps were to release a second single and an album, and then go on the road to promote them. For a variety of reasons, the follow-up 45 was dropped and the first album did not appear for over a year.

Shelter hoped it would be good for a group with such Anglo-pop enthusiasm to record in London. The band were sent to England to record at Trident Studios with producer Robin Cable, but Cordell rejected most of the songs. Only one, 'England' made it onto the album that was eventually released. Worse still, the planned follow up single, 'Shark (In The Dark)', was scrapped, despite being performed on *American Bandstand* in July '75. The unexpected movie box office blockbuster of that summer was *Jaws*, and the record company felt that a song with 'Shark' in the title would be seen as a cheap cash-in. Despite Leon Russell playing keyboards and bass on the track, it was only released on *The Great Lost Twilley Album,* a '93 compilation.

It was decided that the second single should be 'You Were So Warm', an epic ballad showcasing Dwight and Phil's terrific vocal blend. An early, '73-74 acoustic version by Oister was good, but the rerecorded version was even better. A more melodic and original tune than 'Shark', it was one of Dwight's best songs,

SEYMOUR SEES MORE

The other half of the Twilley band's solo career



After parting ways with Dwight Twilley in 1978, the other half of Oister got his solo career off to a great start. Signed by Neil Bogarts' newly formed Boardwalk records, Phil Seymour recorded a self-titled debut album in '80, which amply proved that he was much more than a junior partner; his excellent vocals were a key element in the Twilley band's early success. The album begins with the infectious, self-penned 'Precious To Me', a hit single in the US. The overall sound is very similar to the two Twilley band albums, which is not surprising given that there are two songs by Dwight and two by long-time Twilley band member Bill Pitcock IV, who also plays lead guitar. Phil showed a talent for selecting strong covers, and his version of Bobby Fuller's 'Let Her Dance' gives the original a run for its money. Producer Richard Podolor would later work with Dwight.

Phil was a far less prolific and natural songwriter than Dwight. A second album (imaginatively titled *2*) was recorded and released in '82, but only two of the 10 songs were by Phil. Despite decent covers of his friend Tom Petty's 'Surrender' and Dwight's 'Looking For The Magic', the LP is not as strong as its predecessor. Once again produced by Richard Podolor, his mixes were not used, and, for reasons that are unclear, the whole record was mixed in a single weekend with Val Garay. Days after its release in May '82 Neil Bogart died of cancer and lymphoma, the same sad fate that Seymour would later suffer. Boardwalk records filed for bankruptcy. The album received minimal promotion and was soon removed from the shelves. Without a label, Seymour would never release another solo album before cancer claimed him.

Phil Suggitt

Seymour and Twilley as Oister, circa 1973

"We created our own little world, we created our own little boat we wanted to float, but nobody was handing us any oars"

but failed to reach the Top 100, partly perhaps because it wasn't similar to their breakthrough hit. More significantly, Shelter records imploded in lawsuits and personality clashes. Difficulties and numerous changes with distributors and disputes between Cordell and Russell meant that the single lacked promotion and the album was delayed for months. Russell left the label in '76. The band continued to work hard in the studio, and over 50 songs were stockpiled, but it was over a year before the LP was finally released in July '76. In an online interview with *Americana UK* Dwight said, "We created our own little world, we created our own little boat we wanted to float, but nobody was handing us any oars."

Although (or perhaps because) it was recorded at different times with different musicians in different places, *Sincerely* is a classic album that sounds as fresh and exciting today as it did almost 50 years ago. The vocals are outstanding. The pair were both excellent lead singers who could also harmonise beautifully. Like, say, The Everly Brothers, it was often difficult to tell which one of them was singing at any given time.

A second Shelter album, *Twilley Don't Mind*, was released in August '77. Once again, the critics were highly complementary, but the hoped-for breakthrough never happened. In '78 Dwight and Phil decided to go their own ways and pursue solo careers. Phil felt he wasn't always given the credit he was due and needed to move out of Dwight's shadow, but the split wasn't completely acrimonious. Twilley contributed unreleased songs to Phil's solo LPs and Phil still sang on some of Dwight's albums. (We touch on Phil's solo career in the sidebar.) Tragically, he died of cancer in '93.

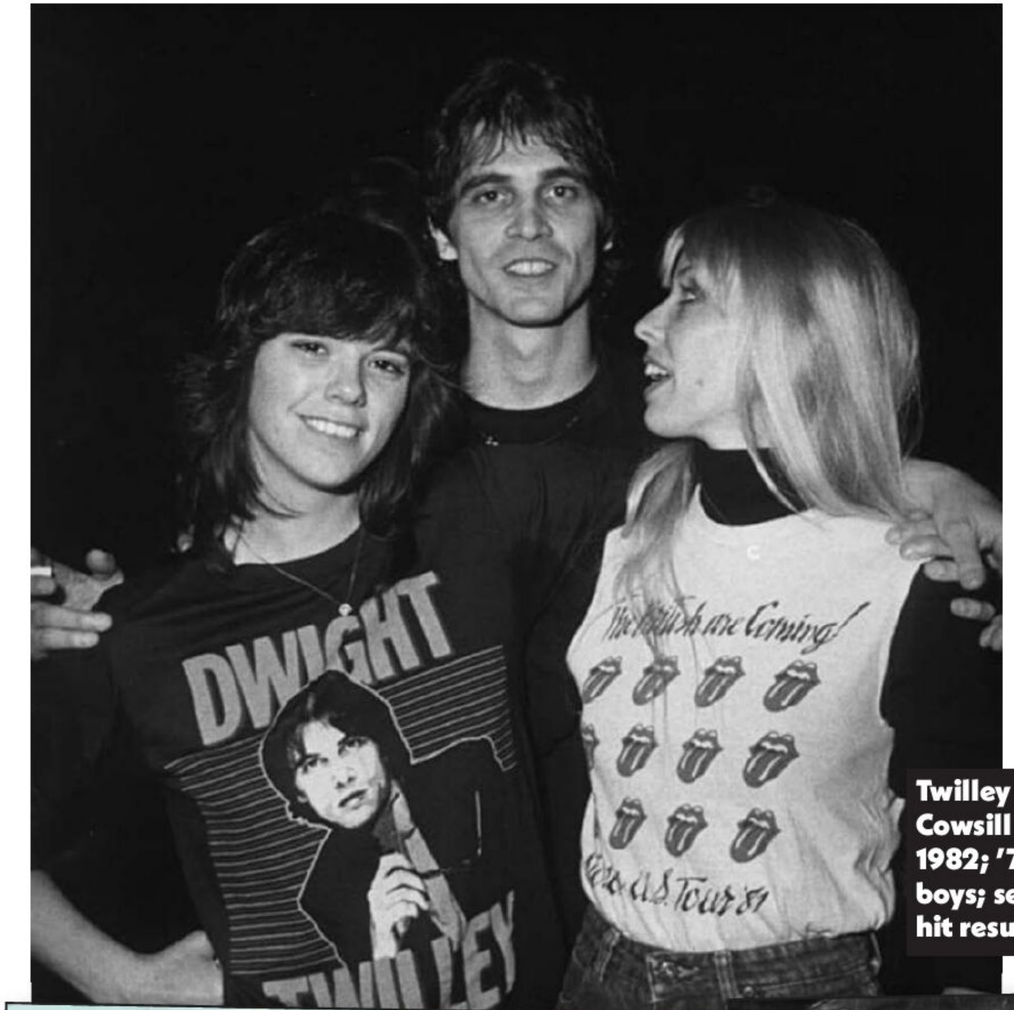
Before Shelter finally went out of business in '79 Dwight issued his first eponymous solo album. Unsurprisingly it continued in much the same style as the Twilley Band albums. The prolific songwriter continued to write and record complete albums of material, which were not released at the time due to problems with the label. The early '80s saw a fruitful association with EMI America. Songs on the albums *Scuba Divers* ('82) and *Jungle* ('84) were among his most creatively and commercially successful, such as 'Somebody To Love', and the outstanding first side of *Jungle,* which included 'Why You Wanna Break My Heart' and 'Girls', which became Dwight's second Top 20 hit in '84, reaching #16, the same position as 'I'm On Fire'. The UK market remained largely immune to his charms, although he had a small but devoted UK fan base.

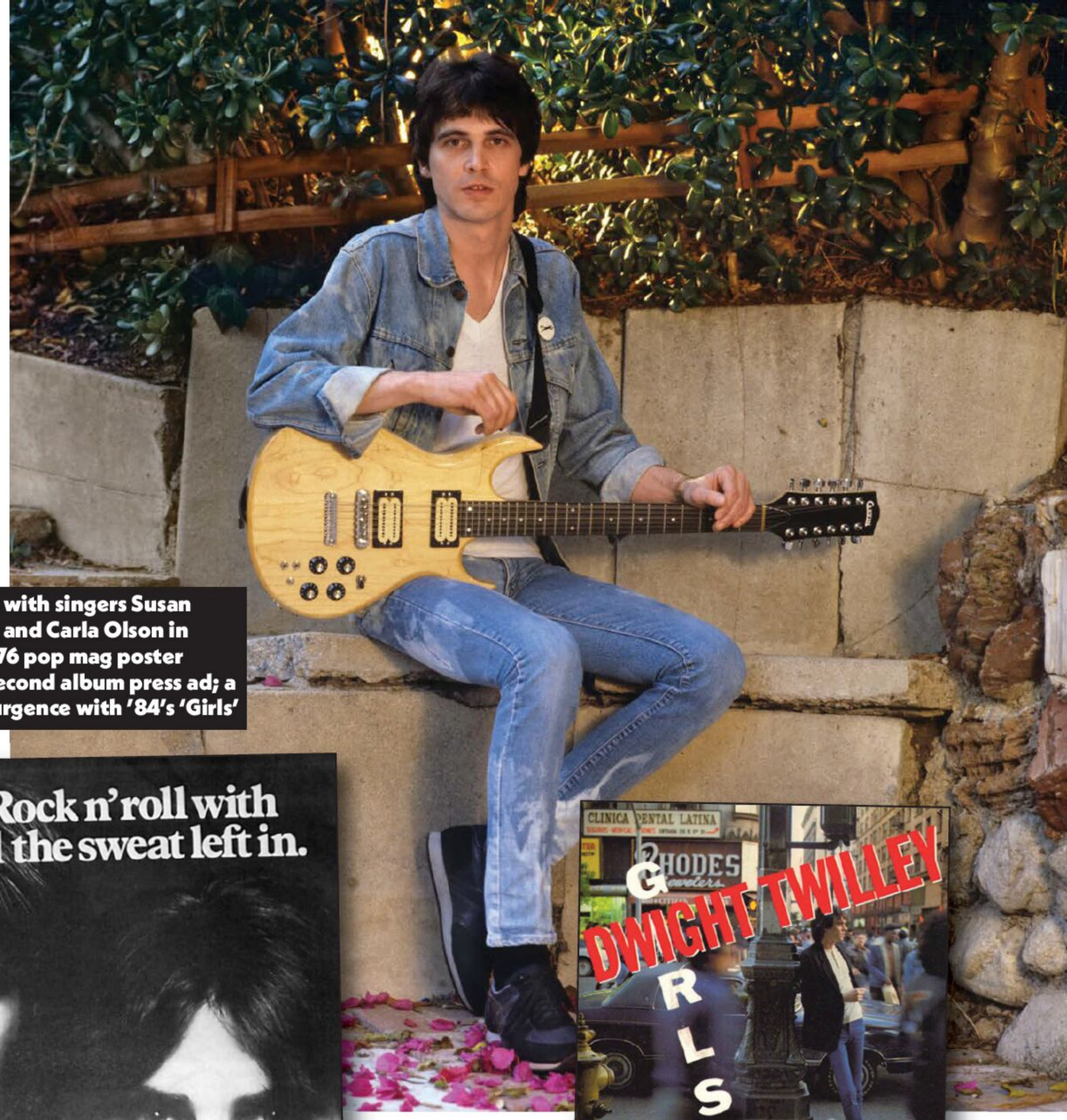
Dwight was enticed to a new label, but his new company was involved in the US record industry payola scandal, and he was shifted to a subsidiary label and instructed to work with a producer, Val Garay. Dwight was unhappy with the relationship and the subsequent album, *Wild Dogs*, ('88) was not one of his best, (although all his solo albums contain some high-quality material; he never produced a really weak record). Subsequent albums would appear on his own label, Big Oak records, or small independent labels.

Dwight continued to write and record during the '90s, but he was without a label and no new songs saw the light of day until '99. A complete album of decent material was shopped around several companies, but only appeared on Dwight's own label in 2001. Produced by Richie Podolor (who also produced Phil Seymour's first two albums in '81 and '82, as well as another powerpop classic, *Look Out* by 20/20), *The Luck* is full of excellent songs such as the title track, 'Perfect World' and 'Oh Carrie'.

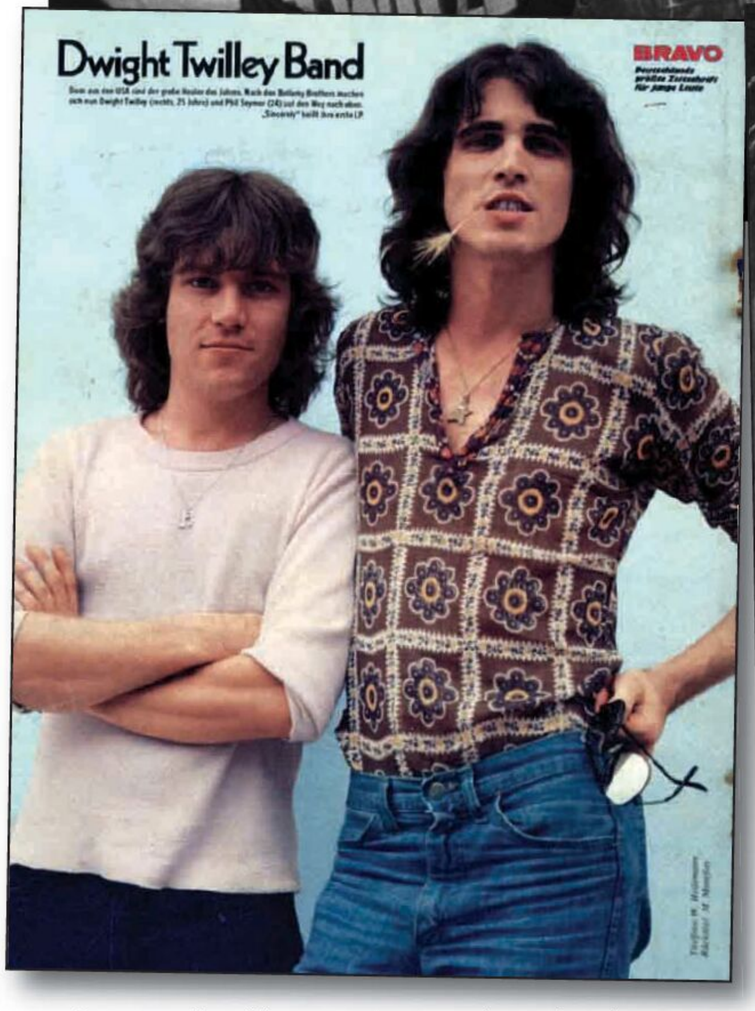
Dwight had no great expectations when he was asked if his eight-year-old song 'Why You Wanna Break my Heart' could be used in a film to be called *Wayne's World*. He expected the film to be a flop, but the '92 movie was a big success and the song, performed by Tia Carrere, was much loved. It's a shame that the version Dwight recorded on *Jungle* wasn't used; although Carrere has a pleasant voice, the original has much more clout, and Dwight sings it with real urgency and passion.

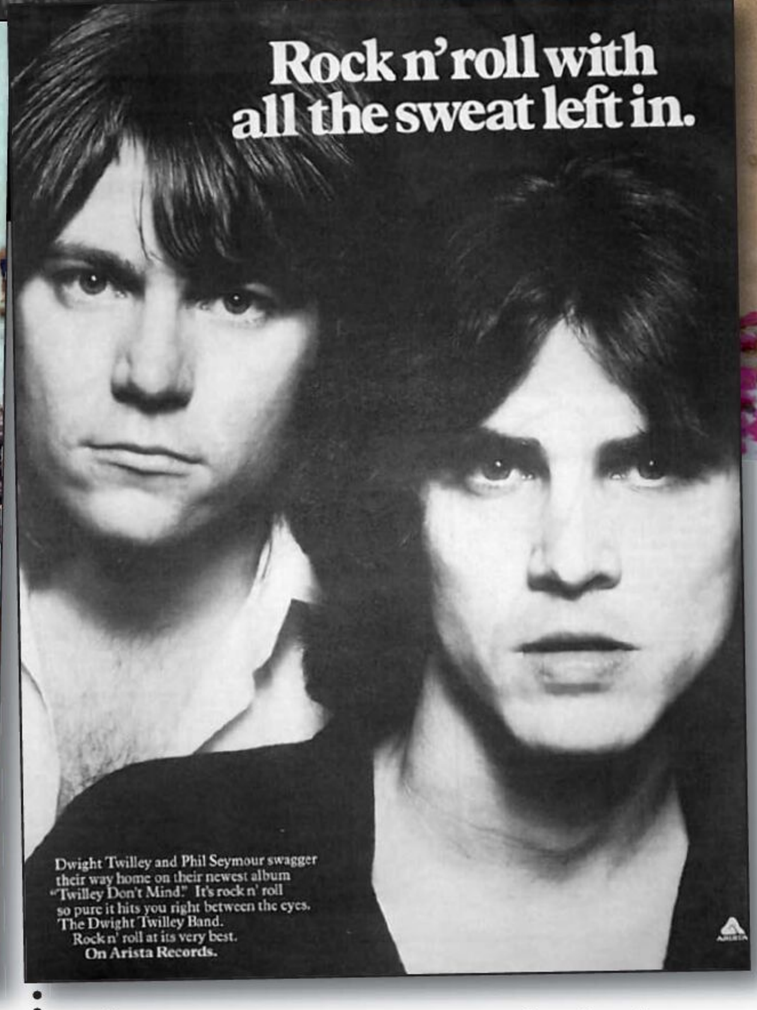
The royalties from *Wayne's World* were an unexpected and life changing event for Twilley. In '94 the Northridge earthquake damaged his home and studio in LA, but the film money helped him to relocate to his hometown, Tulsa, where he was able to create a home studio, Big Oak, named after a certain tree near the house. Tulsa has always had a special place in Twilley's heart, and features in the lyrics and titles

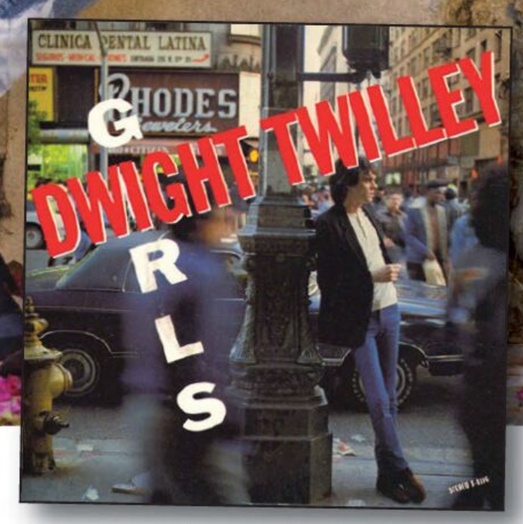




Twilley with singers Susan Cowsill and Carla Olson in 1982; '76 pop mag poster boys; second album press ad; a hit resurgence with '84's 'Girls'







of several of his songs, such as 'Tulsa Town', 'Tulsa' and 'Tulsa Girl'.

Dwight seemingly had the complete package; he was a prolific writer of terrific pop songs with punch, songs that appealed to critics and pop-rock audiences. He not only had the hooks he had the good looks of a teen idol that appealed to a younger pop audience. He seemed tailor made for the emergent MTV generation. Live recordings, such as *Live At The Main Point* ('77) and *Live All Access* (2006) demonstrate that Dwight could also deliver the goods on stage, blending yearning vocals with melodies combining an Anglo-pop sensibility with a rock 'n' roll heart. There seemed no reason why he could not go on to major success in the '80s, yet he never quite achieved the sales and superstardom he seemed destined for. Some writers have described his subsequent career as a "helter skelter ride" that was "plagued with pitfalls". It is important not to paint Twilley as a "nearly man", bitterly ruing his bad breaks and muttering "I could've been a contender!" Most of the pitfalls in his career were down to bad luck and were out of his control. Dwight avoided the self-inflicted wounds that blight the careers of many artists, such as drug abuse, bad relationships, self-indulgence and poor management. As *Shindig!* has repeatedly shown, there are many measures of success in a musical career; success doesn't have to be counted in sales units. In the '70s Twilley befriended his label mate Tom Petty. They respected each other's music and guested on each other's records. (For example, Tom played guitar on 'Lookin' For The Magic' and 'Rock And Roll 47' and contributed backing vocals to 'Girls'). Petty had the luck (and talent, of course) and soared to stadium superstardom, but Twilley was never bitter or envious. He always gave the impression of a man who loved to make music, comfortable in his own skin, who viewed his career and the music business with self-deprecatory humour, glad to acknowledge the respect and admiration of his peers. His talents extended beyond music. He wrote *Questions From Dad* in '94, a guide to help long-distance fathers to communicate with their children if they were separated by divorce, work or other factors. He was also a talented painter.

The dramatic and rapid 21st century technological changes in the music industry enabled Dwight to control his own destiny. Without the need for a major label or distribution network he has been able to record and release a great deal of new music, usually recorded at his home studio and engineered by his wife Jan. His last studio album, *Always* was released in 2014 on his own Big Oak records, when he was 63. Every one of his solo studio albums contains songs at least as good, or better than his more famous hit singles. Whilst the vocal blend of Seymour and Twilley was gone, Dwight became expert at overlaying several layers of his own vocals. On many sessions he was ably supported by the vocals of Susan Cowsill, (and also her brother John Cowsill on drums).

Throughout his career Twilley stockpiled a huge amount of archival material that was unreleased at the time of recording. Seven volumes of an archival *Rarities* series were released in 2008/9, in addition to the aforementioned '94 unreleased album *The Luck*. He's also been able to release material that would probably not have seen daylight on a major label, such as an EP of cheesy Christmas songs, a CD of faithful Beatles covers and *Out Of The Box*, a covers collection.

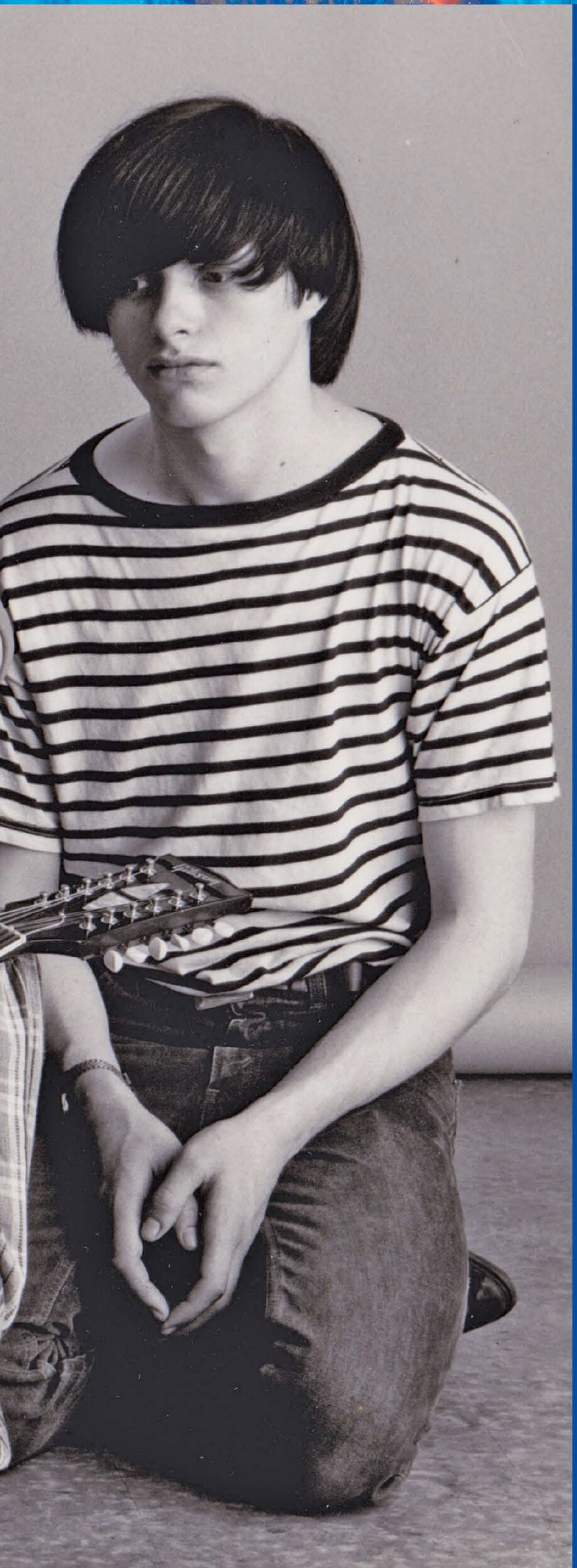
On Dwight's 21st century Tulsa recordings there are clear stylistic similarities with his '70s and '80s work. That isn't to say he simply ploughed the same furrow for 50 years. Some artists (Bowie being an obvious example) progress by "throwing the ball further" – by constantly pushing the boundaries, changing their styles and approaches. Others, like Dwight, stayed within a defined style but try to bounce the ball higher. His legacy is great. S!

Looking For The Magic: American Powerpop In The Seventies is out now on Grapefruit

DAWN OF

"One minute it was 'shamble bands', or 'twee', or 'dream-pop' – it's all quite amusing." 14 Iced Bears in 1988. L-R: Susan Freeman, Graham Durrant, Will Taylor, Robert Sekula (front), Kevin Canham

THE ICE AGE



14 ICED BEARS were an integral part of the mid-80s indie-pop scene, drawing from the sonic textures of contemporaries The Jesus And Mary Chain and key psychedelic influences The West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band and The 13th Floor Elevators. Loved by John Peel and complemented by hero Alex Chilton, their path to "cult success" was guaranteed.

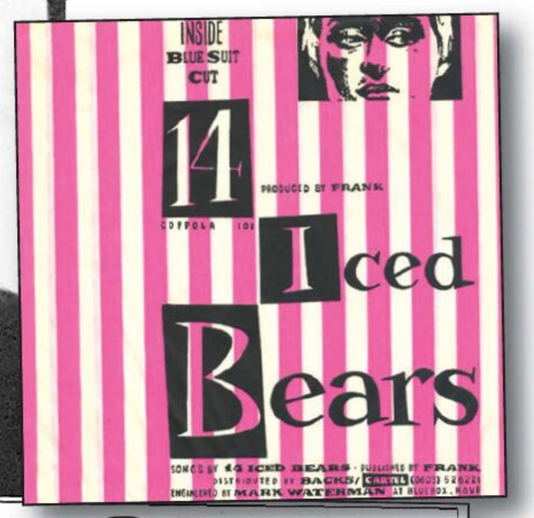
CAMILLA AISA meets leader **ROBERT SEKULA.**

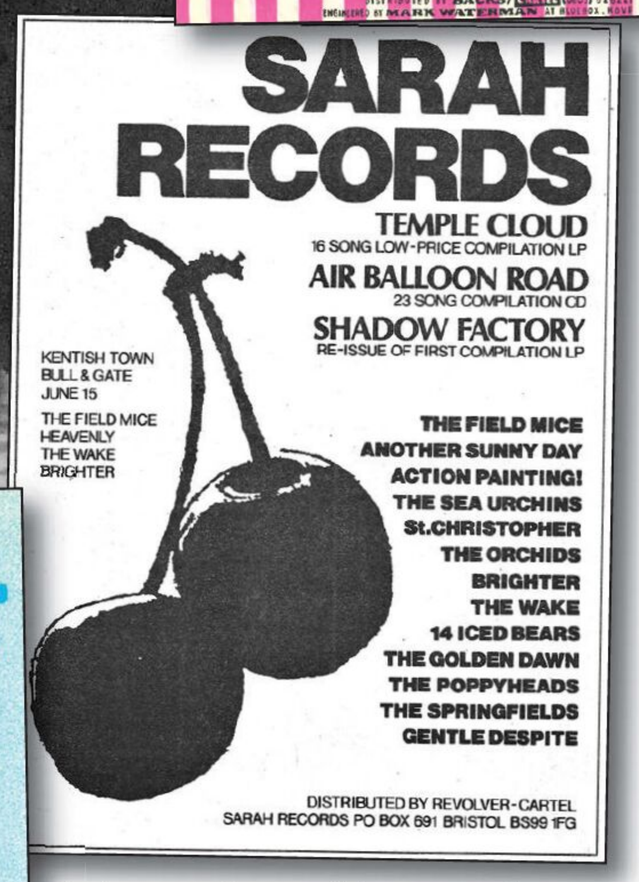
Portrait by **GAVIN DURRANT**

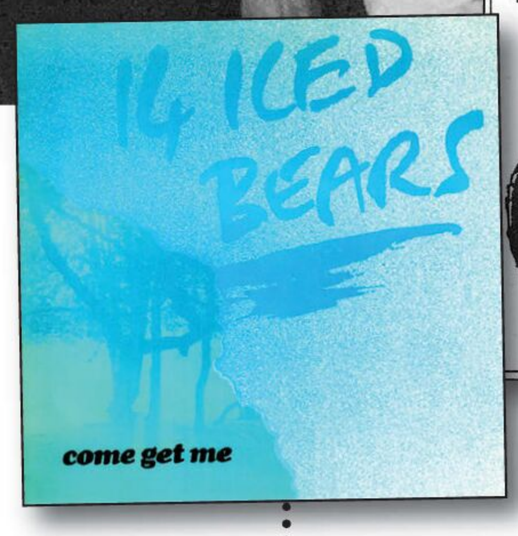
If you happened to switch on the telly one night in November 1985, you could have watched the BBC nature documentary *Kingdom Of The Ice Bear*, featuring beautiful footage of the northern Arctic fauna. But if you happened to be out and about in Brighton on that very same night, you could have encountered another, far noisier pack of bears. 14 Iced Bears were making their live debut that night, birthing a music that was as worthy of careful documentation as their hairy namesakes. They played a cover of Syd Barrett's 'Late Night', using a glass aftershave bottle for a proper slide guitar effect. The gig also included a member of the audience invading the stage in order to give a reggae-toast. "A bit of a surprise in your virgin concert," 14 Iced Bears frontman Robert Sekula now considers. On their way to the club the taxi driver had told them that he, too, had been in a band once. The group turned out to be Chicory Tip, whose hit 'Son Of My Father' (the first UK chart-topping single to prominently feature a Moog synthesiser) Sekula remembered hearing on *Top Of The Pops*. "If that's not destiny, I don't know what is!" he reflects, 40 years later.

PHOTO BY JAMES DUNCALF

The Sarah Records line-up. L-R: Stephen Ormsby, Canham, Durrant, Freeman, Sekula; 1986 debut 'Inside'; '88's 'Come Get Me'; Sarah press ad





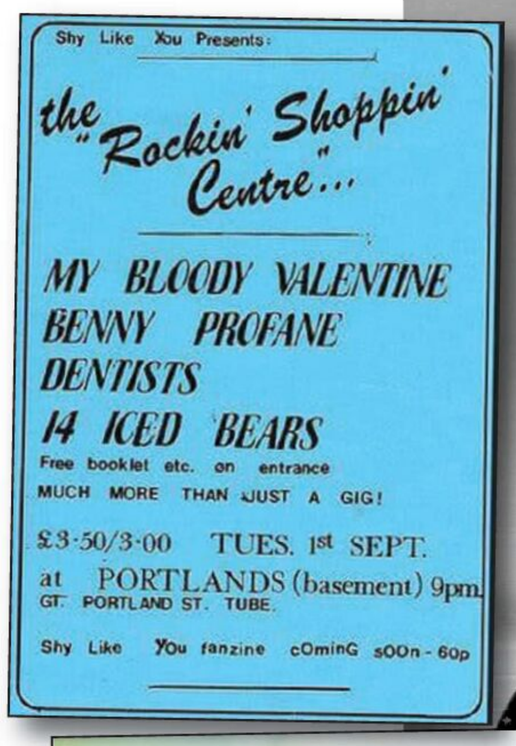


When he was four, a teacher had put Sekula in front of a xylophone and noticed a singular flair for music. Piano lessons soon followed, but a classical training wasn't really what the young boy felt attracted to. At 16 he turned to the guitar side, setting to further explore the first glimpses of seismic electricity his older brother's Marc Bolan records had showed him. Around 1979, a mate in his sixth-form turned Sekula on to The Jam. "Soon Paul Weller was referencing people like Syd Barrett in interviews as The Jam were going *that way* with *Sound Affects,*" he recalls. "I remember buying a weird LP called *Monsters Of Rock* that was all the early Pink Floyd singles and B-sides. I fell in love with Syd and his music." But it wasn't just '60s cult heroes that led him towards a trip-friendly path. "What doesn't seem to be remembered much these days is that in the early '80s so many of the original punk bands were going psychedelic," he considers. Tunes such as The Jam's 'Tales From The Riverbank', The Stranglers' 'Golden Brown', The Undertones' 'Julie Ocean' and Buzzcocks' 'Strange Thing', together with the burgeoning neo-psych movement, signalled post-punk's interest in a free sound that refused to stay in the past. "I remember buying the *A Splash Of Colour* compilation that had people like Mood Six and Miles Over Matter, who I saw live at the time with the audience all in paisley multi-colours," says Sekula. "There was definitely something in the air. Plus, Julian Cope was giving his lists of great psych bands in the music papers, while the Bunnymen got me into The Doors and the Velvets."

When Sekula moved to Brighton it was for academic reasons. What actually prompted him to enrol at The University Of Sussex was the possibility of forming a band. The first one he joined had the not-too-inventive name of The Velvet Underground and played, you guessed it, Velvets covers. Then, Sekula and a friend from university, Nick Emery, decided to form their own group. "He learnt the drums from scratch," Sekula points out. "Luckily, this gave a unique, raw style to his playing as he hadn't been schooled in 'proper drumming'. We got together with a bass player called Alan Taylor and had a few songs I sent out as a demo to the labels I knew of, like Pink."It was a marriage of biscuits and football that gave the young band its moniker, as Sekula lowered the name of a packet of biscuits (15 Iced Bears) by one in a homage to Dutch player Johan Cruyff (number 14 with both Ajax and the Netherlands' national team). Among the first songs the band demoed was 'Jumped In A Puddle', which they played during their second gig in early '86. One audience member was particularly impressed: Mark Flunder, drummer with Television Personalities and founder of freshly launched label Frank, immediately offered them a deal. "He thought that 'Jumped In A Puddle' was a mod classic and should be the single," Sekula recalls. "The trouble was I felt it was too catchy and commercial. I wasn't sure if it would garner the type of fame I wanted. It probably sounds a bit mad to people, I know!"

Instead, the band picked 'Inside' as their debut single, a number that originated when, during a rehearsal, rhythmic guitarist Kevin Canham started playing a chord pattern and Sekula followed by playing just one high chord through the whole song, inspired by The Jesus And Mary Chain's screaming feedback. *Pitchfork* would retrospectively find ''Inside' to be "an oddity both then and now", adding that it "alchemically combines droning noise, hushed melancholy, and a nearly nauseating aura of discordance that presages My Bloody Valentine's *Isn't Anything* by two years". The second track of the 'Inside' seven was 'Blue Suit', possibly 14 Iced Bears' oldest song. Sekula had started writing it at the end of '84, trying to channel the energy of The Fall. Closing the set was 'Cut', still one of the most beloved pieces in the band's multifaceted catalogue. "As succinct and anthemic a statement of romantic hopelessness as indie-pop has ever produced," Michael White writes in *Popkiss*, his history of cult label Sarah Records (whose path would soon cross that of 14 Iced Bears). "It's hard to say there was a defining track, as we were constantly developing, but maybe 'Cut' was the closest," Sekula concedes. "It went on the journey with us a bit, from the first single to the debut LP. I still love playing it live today."

A new kind of pop was blossoming in the UK. A deluge of names was attached to it, with typical pressure from the press to pin it down and bundle as many artists as possible in easy-to-commodify monikers. There was, after the release of a soon-to-be influential cassette from the *NME*, *C86*. There was indie-pop that many liked to call "cutie", or "twee". There was what John Peel championed as shambling pop. There was psychedelia making a forceful comeback, and pop songs that refused to choose between melody and noise, innocence and disenchantment. As far as the artists were concerned, Sekula explains, "It wasn't so nailed down in terms of labels. It was mainly the language of journalists as their way of codifying things. One minute it was 'shamble bands', or 'twee', or 'dream-pop' – it's all quite amusing. We didn't sit down and agree on being indie, psych or whatever, it's just how it went naturally." As Simon Reynolds would consider in 2006, the most crucial aspect of this



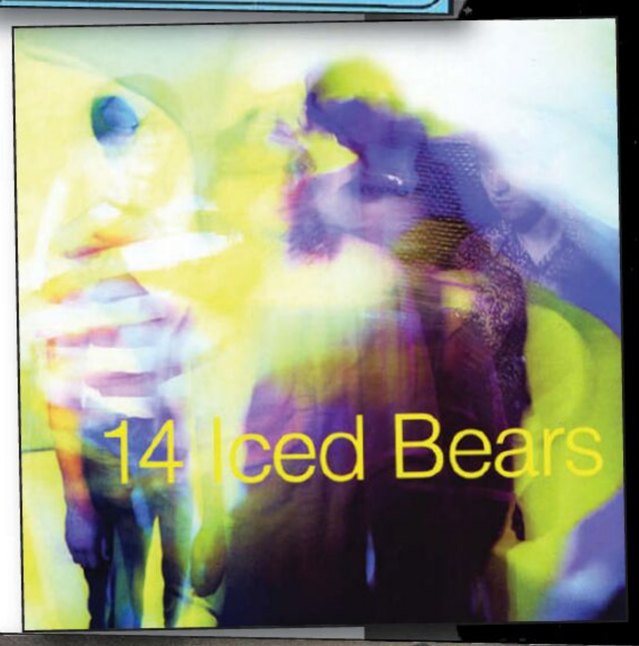


PHOTO BY GAVIN DURRANT

First album line-up, 1988; typical late '80s London bill; '88's self-titled debut album; Thunderball Records press ad

"I remember buying the *A Splash Of Colour* compilation that had people like Mood Six and Miles Over Matter, who I saw live at the time with the audience all in paisley multi-colours. There was definitely something in the air"

movement of many names is that it involved a resurgence of the do-it-yourself ideal – "Young people shoving aside inhibiting notions of professionalism and gleefully making their own culture. The upside of this was a spirit of egalitarianism and autonomy… So, if we must have a culture of rampant retromania, maybe this is a UK pop moment worthy of commemoration."

14 Iced Bears were on the psychedelic edge of this zeitgeist. They were in good company, too. "The Jesus And Mary Chain had brought out their first single, 'Upside Down', and I loved the sweet melody over the walls of feedback," Sekula says of his like-minded contemporaries. "But what grabbed me the most was their cover of Syd Barrett's Pink Floyd out-take 'Vegetable Man'. This is what hooked me into the rise of new bands like The Pastels and Primal Scream: I loved their melodious songs, like the former's 'Something Going On' or the Primals' early sessions, which seemed so fresh compared to the gothic fare that was prevalent. I was into the Postcard stuff when it came out, seeing Orange Juice at their early London gigs. It felt exciting to hear all this new music, especially from Glasgow. When you went to the gigs, you'd see similar people each time and become friends, which became a national underground network. The bands and audiences were very connected. I remember a few of us had a big snowball fight with Primal Scream after their early gig at The Basement in Brighton."

Together with Barrett, the free spirits of the '60s that acted as cornerstones for 14 Iced Bears were The West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band (Sekula's favourite group) and The 13th Floor Elevators. The band's first compilation, '89's *Precision*, would be dedicated to the Elevators' Tommy Hall. "If Echo & The Bunnymen were neo-psychedelia's Doors and The Teardrop Explodes its Pink Floyd, then 14 Iced Bears were the movement's 13th Floor Elevators," AllMusic suggests.

What Sekula calls the Liverpool lot (Wah! Heat, as well as the more popular Teardrops and Bunnymen) was still the most listened-to thing in the 14 Iced Bears ranks ("I remember thinking I couldn't go out with a girl unless she liked the Bunnymen!") but slipping through the band's consciousness was also the influence of other, slightly less traceable favourites, like Big Star and acid-house ("It was happening in underground venues and on the beach at the time, and I was really excited by it. People were telling me that the ravers danced like I was already dancing! So I started going and really loved the weird sounds that were coming out.")

On 28th October '86 14 Iced Bears recorded their first Peel session, produced by Mott The Hoople founding member Dale Griffin – he was a big fan of 'Cut', it turned out. The session was broadcast almost a month later, with Peel raving about each track (the above-mentioned 'Cut', 'Balloon Song', 'Shy Like You' and 'Train Song'). "He said stuff like 'I like these Iced Bears, all 14 of them' and 'my kind of band'," Sekula enthuses. "That was the big thing that helped us at the beginning." The EP *The Importance Of Being Frank* was released in '87. It opened with 'Balloon Song', one of the band's most striking compositions, a neo-psychedelic classic that never was, born

PHOTO BY JAMES DUNCALF

Queen's Park, Brighton, 1988

out of Sekula's reverence for Burt Bacharach melodies. Closer 'Like A Dolphin', on the other hand, was a play on a far more recent pop staple, Madonna's 'Like A Virgin'. The band's second Peel session was recorded on 21st July '87. Upon catching it on the radio, Sarah Records co-founder Matt Haynes noted in the *Sarah 4* fanzine that he had heard 'Spangle' melt into the empty aching void of 'Hayfever', and that listening to those stunning tracks had got him thinking that "Life is oh just big soppy tears and that's why I love it so and why all this is IMPORTANT and I want everyone to feel like me and LOVE IT ALL." 14 Iced Bears and the quintessential UK indie-pop label teaming up was a meant-to-be. Sekula was a fan of The Sea Urchins, whose 'Pristine Christine' had been the very first single released by Sarah. The Bears' *Come Get Me* EP, released in April '88, would be the label's fifth release and the band's first to feature Graham Durrant on drums. *Come Get Me* opened with the sprightly blasts of noise of 'Unhappy Days' and closed on a note of jangly contemplation with 'Sure To See'. It was a match made in heaven, yes, but 14 Iced Bears were ready for a full-length release, and by then Sarah only focused on singles.

The band eventually signed to Thunderball, a one-man label based in Essex, for their much-awaited debut album. The eponymously titled *14 Iced Bears* LP was recorded in a cramped North London basement with the fetid summer heat at the door; it is maybe because of this that some found it having a slightly claustrophobic feel. By then, the band was a well-oiled machine: at rehearsals, they would play around over guitar lines or bass patterns one of the members had come up with, until a tune would come into and out of Sekula's head. Finally, they would work the rest of the music around what he'd created. A perfect vehicle for a '60s-80s alliance, opener 'Take It' kicked things off with a raucous psychedelic attack. "By then I was already getting into stuff like The United States Of America and Silver Apples, which had the freaky electronics," Sekula reflects. "I wanted to recreate those sounds on 'Take It' but had no idea how. It ended up sounding in bits like a squeaky bicycle wheel! Only recently have I learned how to make and manipulate the classic 303 sound in my home studio, Inside Outside Studios (named after The West Coast Pop Art Experimental Band song), and I'm hoping to at last release the "originally intended version" very soon. It only took me 35 years!" The influence of The United States Of America was even more evident in the 12" the band released that same year, *Mother Sleep*. The second track was a rework of that group's '68 electronic psych classic 'Coming Down' (which, in recent years, even got the approval of USA lead singer Dorothy Moskowitz via YouTube). "It was just the sort of stuff that we loved and were inspired by at the time, so we thought it would be fun to have a go at it. We also played The West Coast Pop Art's 'Smell Of Incense' a lot live," says Sekula. The hypnotic 'Mother Sleep' was another high point for 14 Iced Bears. Some six months after writing it, Sekula joined a kundalini yoga group in Brighton. "I experienced weird effects, like a buzzing coming out of my head during the practises and tingling of my fingers, which I was told were signs of the kundalini working through my body," he describes. "They began saying things like 'feel the cool breeze over the top of your head', which was a sign of the kundalini opening up your chakras." He soon started to realise that this tied in quite remarkably with the lyrics he had written for 'Mother Sleep'. People in the yoga group spoke of an Indian woman who was supposed to be a divine healer of the world. They called her The Divine Mother, which felt like another serendipitous coincidence. "I told

Bright-On!

"Even just thinking of it makes me smile", says 14 Iced Bears frontman Robert Sekula of the now legendary Sunshine Playroom, the Wednesday club night started around 1987 at The Escape Club, just off Brighton seafront, by friends Sean Sullivan and Gordon Kaye.

"We were all devotees of the local Big Twang club, which had been running there since '85," Sekula explains. "The Big Twang was the Brighton section of the wave that was breaking through the country and now known as C86. We played our first Brighton gigs there supporting some of the bands that came down. When the club ended after a year or so, we were gutted but Sean and Gordon gave us a place to all keep meeting. It was a disco instead of gigs, which seemed to reinforce the subculture togetherness. Lots of local bands, such as Whirl and Blow Up, and those from around Sussex, like Spitfire, would all hang out, as well as all the local indie kids. From what I remember, it was always busy. They were the best Wednesday nights I've ever known, definitely! Around '88 Sean got more and more into playing psychedelic stuff, which represented what was happening to a lot of us in the area. Many of us, including me, were diving right into the whole '60s counterculture, gorging on the films and music of the times, wearing the clothes and doing quite a bit of acid. Some nights half the dance floor would be tripping off their nuts as the psychedelic classics were ringing out. I'm pretty sure one odd night, Sean insisted on just playing psychedelic Beatles songs and nothing else!"

Getting to know each other thanks to the indie clubs in town, Brighton bands soon started forging a bond. "The town was the right size for that," Sekula reflects. "We did all hang around a lot and, in my case at least, tried to live out some sort of '60s psychedelic nirvana."

As told to Camilla Aisa

Circa 1990/91, L-R: Sekula, Canham, Graham, Durrant, Tim White; on stage circa '89; '91's 'Hold On' 12-inch and *Wonder* album

"I was already getting into stuff like **The United States Of America** and **Silver Apples**, which had the freaky electronics. I wanted to recreate those sounds but had no idea how. It ended up sounding like a squeaky bicycle wheel!"

the group and they arranged for me to meet her at the airport when she next came back to the UK and show her the lyrics, which I did. She smiled and said it was a prayer to her. After that, members of the group began coming to our gigs and said they saw the goddess Kali above the stage while we played that song. How psychedelic is that?"

Nineteen eighty-nine saw the release of another single on Thunderball, 'World I Love'. Of all 14 Iced Bears recordings, the B-side's second track, 'Beautiful Child', is probably the one on which their love of Big Star best comes to the fore. Years later the band would find themselves opening for all-time hero Alex Chilton. "My favourite gig memory with the Bears was when we supported him at The Zap Club in Brighton, '90," Sekula gushes. "I went backstage and Alex said, 'Man, I really liked your set, sophisticated stuff.' He didn't seem the type to throw compliments around, so I was incredibly chuffed. After that, I didn't care what anyone else thought about us! We hung out after, with him rolling endless spliffs, and it was a great laugh."

Long-player number two came in musically busy year '91. Already marking a noticeable difference from its predecessor, *Wonder* was recorded in a big house in the Norfolk countryside. "I was wandering and wondering down beautiful, autumnal country lanes miles away from humans and getting in a state where I was sending out love to the trees around me and getting inspiration for lyrics in return," Sekula gushes. "A lot of the lyrics came that way, just before returning to the house to record them. It was a wonderful time as we all got on pretty well together that week and concentrated on the album." The blissed-out 'Love On A Sugar Mountain', in particular, seems to reflect this nature-shrouded placidity. But *Wonder* doesn't shy away from revealing a more shadowy side to the band's aural identity. "Changing just one person always made a huge difference to the sound," Sekula considers, "and Tim White replacing Will Taylor on bass perhaps led to a heavier, darker sound on *Wonder*, rather than the more poppy psych from before." Like the indefinable '60s deep cuts they most loved, 14 Iced Bears had a knack for constantly evolving. Despite their proximity to the C86 scene, *Wonder* brims with moments that sit well with the dreamier offerings of shoegaze. "We never wanted to stand still in a sound," Sekula states. "It was just a natural process of development. In a funny way, we mirrored The Beatles! We went from quite poppy (albeit indie-pop) to more and more psych-y. Then I got heavily into eastern meditation, and we were pretty heavy by the time we split up in '92."

The 'Hold On' 12-inch' showed, once again, how surprising they could be, as it paired a Ride-leaning titular song with an inspired cover of, wait for it, *Grease* classic 'Summer Nights', first recorded for the anti-poll tax LP *Alvin Lives (In Leeds)*, which paired contemporary indie darlings and '70s hits. "Will started slowly grinding out the notes to the *Grease* song and we all thought, yeah!" Sekula laughs. "It just seemed to naturally flow into the version we did, as if we were accessing it from some cosmic library, which to some extent is what coming up with songs feels like to me. We used to love playing it live, too."

Speaking of gigs, the band's tour schedule had grown quite busy through the years, whether through dream pairings (support slots for legends like the above-mentioned Chilton and The Velvet Underground's Moe Tucker) or comedy of errors-worthy misadventures with vans and trains. 14 Iced Bears closed the first chapter of their story in '92 (they would eventually reconvene, starting from 2010, for new tours). Fate had it that the band, continuously marked by line-up changes, mostly bassists, as Sekula points out, would end up having 14 members. Fascinating coincidences had been on their side from day one. S!

A handful of musical mavericks crafted unique, idiosyncratic time capsules during the late ’60s and early ’70s before moving on to more reliable and profitable day jobs.

The Last Cloud

One such talent is *WIL MALONE*, whose genre-defying, zeitgeist-embracing work, released under a baffling number of aliases, bears an unmistakable stamp that set him apart and paved the way for a successful future.

***DAVID WELLS* takes a trip in search of new feet**

Over the last 30 years or so, Wil Malone has established himself as one of the industry's leading string arrangers, integral to such cornerstone ’90s creations as The Verve's 'Bittersweet Symphony' and Massive Attack's 'Unfinished Sympathy' while also working with acts as disparate as Cliff Richard and UNKLE, Black Sabbath and The Four Seasons, Iron Maiden and DJ Shadow. But as the poet said, one man in his time plays many parts. Wil Malone was responsible for a significant and highly collectable body of work many years before he finally established himself as a heavyweight name. During the late ’60s and early ’70s, he worked exclusively out of Morgan Studios in Willesden, northwest London as one of a small cabal of musicians, songwriters and producers under the aegis of Morgan co-owner, the avuncular Monty Babson. This feature concentrates on his early apprenticeship in the British music industry, when his ability to master multiple disciplines – multi-instrumentalist, songwriter, vocalist, producer, arranger – saw this consummate pop polymath as the driving force behind such obscure names as Orange Bicycle, Fickle Pickle and the deathlessly-titled Wilson Malone Voiceband…

Home

"We weren't hippies – that was a term invented by the media to ridicule us." Wil Malone photographed for the cover of his 1970 solo album

Born in 1942 (not '52, as suggested by various internet sources), Wilson Malone's first band of any note was formed at the start of the '60s with his friend and fellow Hornsey resident, singer Robb Scales. Noting that leading British pop manager Larry Parnes insisted on giving his stable of putative pop stars more masculine, aggressive surnames (Tommy Steele, Marty Wilde, Duffy Power, Vince Eager, Sid Vicious etc), Scales renamed himself Robb Storme, with his backing band christened The Whispers. They included fresh-faced youngster Peter Wilson (who, like Scales, adopted a professional pseudonym – in his case Wil Malone) on drums and backing vocals.

After winning a talent competition at the Soho Fair, they signed to Decca, releasing a debut single, 'One Thousand Nine Hundred And When', in October '60. Several further singles were issued, including 'Pretty Hair And Angel Eyes' (entered into A Song For Europe to find the British entry for *The Eurovision Song Contest*), but their lack of success forced Storme and his group to re-evaluate. "We were very raw and green," the singer would admit. "So we decided to scrub round recordings, which are an art form after all, and get out with the one-nighters and learn."

They subsequently concentrated on working as a live act, playing British dance halls as well as performing at US air bases in France and Germany, before signing to Pye subsidiary Piccadilly, who relaunched them as a vocal harmony-based recording group in July '63. An early August puff piece by Peter Jones in *Record Mirror* set the scene. "After 18 months of touring, travelling and living out of suitcases, Robb and the Whispers are back on record. Much improved, vocally and instrumentally; more confident on their new label Pye Piccadilly; hopeful that 'Happens Ev'ryday' and 'Surprise Surprise', two originals by their drummer Wilson Malone, can do the trick for them." Jones went on to list the Whispers' personnel, with Jim St. Pier (saxophones and "comedy vocals"), Chuck Hardy (guitar) and Eddie McManus (bass) joining "drummer Wilson Malone, songwriter, arranger, 22-year-old who adopts a humorous approach to his drumming."

Storme's versatility as a singer and eclectic musical tastes meant that Malone – who has claimed in interviews that he'd wanted to be an arranger since the age of 12, when he first heard American composer Samuel Barber's Adagio For Strings – received a valuable apprenticeship, as Wil would later reflect. "When you were trying to get work as a band you had to play a lot of covers of songs that were in the charts. I was capable of working out the components of a song and relaying it to the rest of the band so we would sound pretty accurate when we played it."

Sadly, Wil Malone's first recorded songs (an earlier B-side was credited to a Malone, but it was Jack rather than Wil) failed to send Robb Storme & The Whispers to the toppermost of the poppermost, and the remaining two A-sides for Pye/Piccadily were covers of established songs. Nevertheless, Malone was allowed to write both B-sides, 'Bu-Bop-A-Lu-Bop-A-Lie' and 'Shy Guy'.

After being dropped by Pye, they were picked up by Monty Babson, a Sinatra-style crooner who'd just started working as an independent producer out of Lansdowne Studios in Holland Park, London. Lansdowne's productions were regularly issued by EMI's Columbia imprint, and in November '65 they issued the latest Robb Storme & The Whispers single, Wil Malone's 'Where Is My Girl'. It wasn't a hit, though Pete Townshend – who'd heard it when he was asked by *Melody Make*r to comment on the latest singles – shamelessly nicked the melody for 'Substitute'. "The stock, downbeat riff used in the verses I pinched from a record played to me in 'Blind Date', a feature in *Melody Maker*," he gleefully admitted in '71. "It was by a group who later wrote to thank me for saying nice things about their record in the feature. The record I said nice things about wasn't a hit, despite an electrifying riff. I pinched it, we did it, you bought it." Nevertheless, the single had brought Storme and The Whispers into Babson's orbit, and he quickly identified Wil Malone as a significant talent.

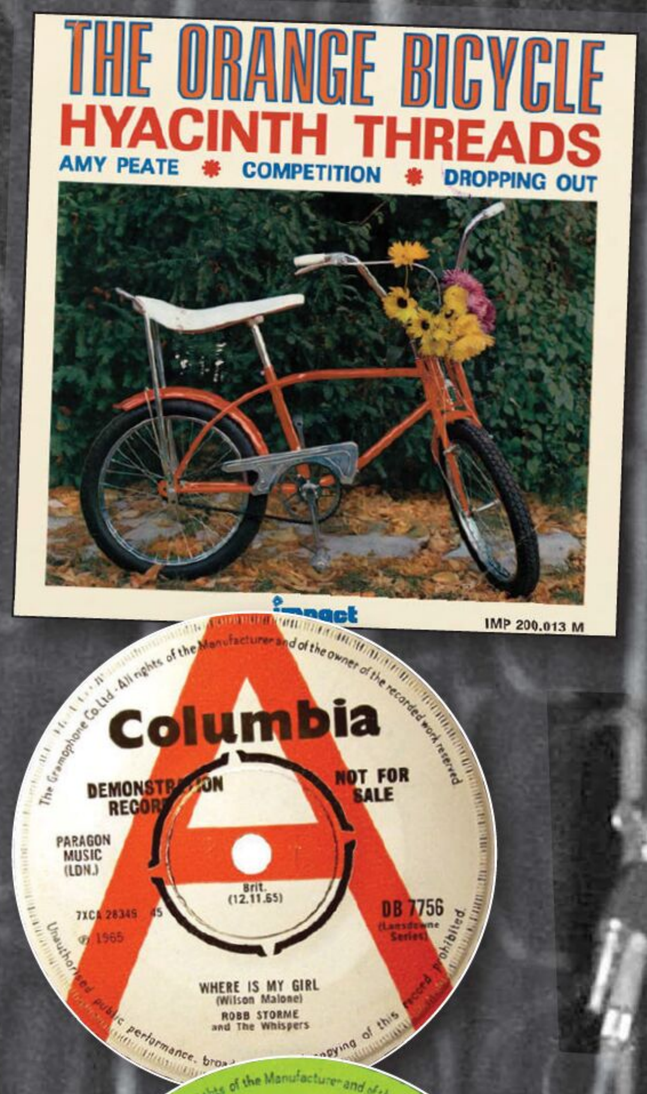
With their rock 'n' roll-style nomenclature starting to sound dated, they opted for a change to The Robb Storme Group for their strongest double-sider to date. Issued in August '66, 'Here Today' was one of numerous covers of songs from new Beach Boys masterpiece *Pet Sounds*, but Malone's punchy arrangement meant it was much more than a straightforward clone job. Backed by arguably Wil's best song yet in 'But Cry', the single fell just short of the BBC national charts but showed up well on pirate radio listings, peaking at #40 in Radio London's chart and #23 on Radio Caroline. Recorded by the group's latest line-up, with stalwarts Storme, Malone and St. Pier joined by guitarist Tony Ollard and bassist Gary Hooper, the single was also issued in North America and various European territories. The Swedish release was housed in a striking picture sleeve but used a photo of the group's subsequent line-up, with former Mojos bassist Lewis Collins having replaced the departing Hooper. Collins (who, a few months later, dropped out of the music industry to attend drama school, subsequently becoming a highly successful actor in the '70s) didn't actually record with the group during his time with them.

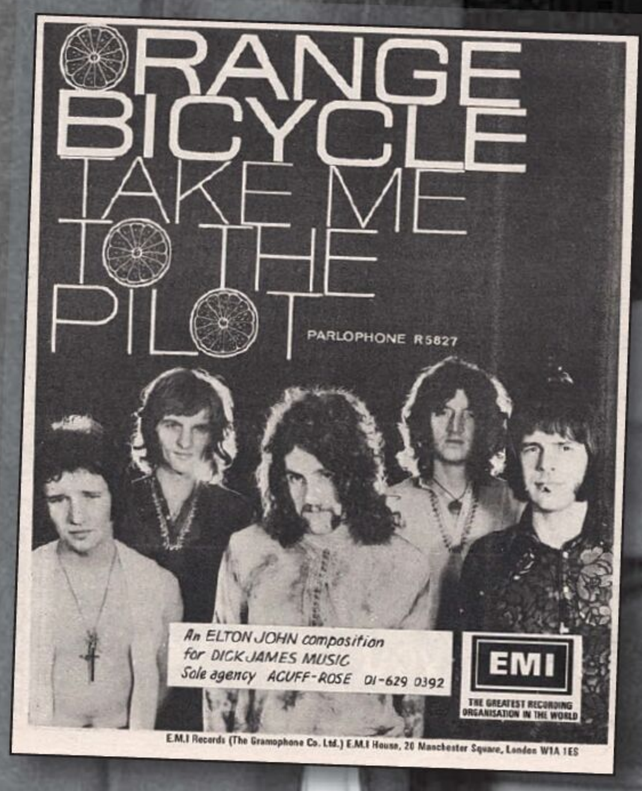
Meanwhile, the band became the regular live backing group for Paul & Barry Ryan, appearing with the twins on BBC TV before embarking on a March-April '67 package tour jaunt around the country with them. When psychedelia hit that summer, though, they decided on a new identity that reflected the lysergic fripperies of the new movement. The Robb Storme Group became The Orange Bicycle, with St Pier, Ollard – who, in late '67, would replace Eddie Phillips in The Creation – and Collins no longer involved, but with former Symbols man John Bachini coming in on bass. Bachini hailed from Luton, which is why Orange Bicycle have mistakenly been claimed over the years to be a Luton-based act.

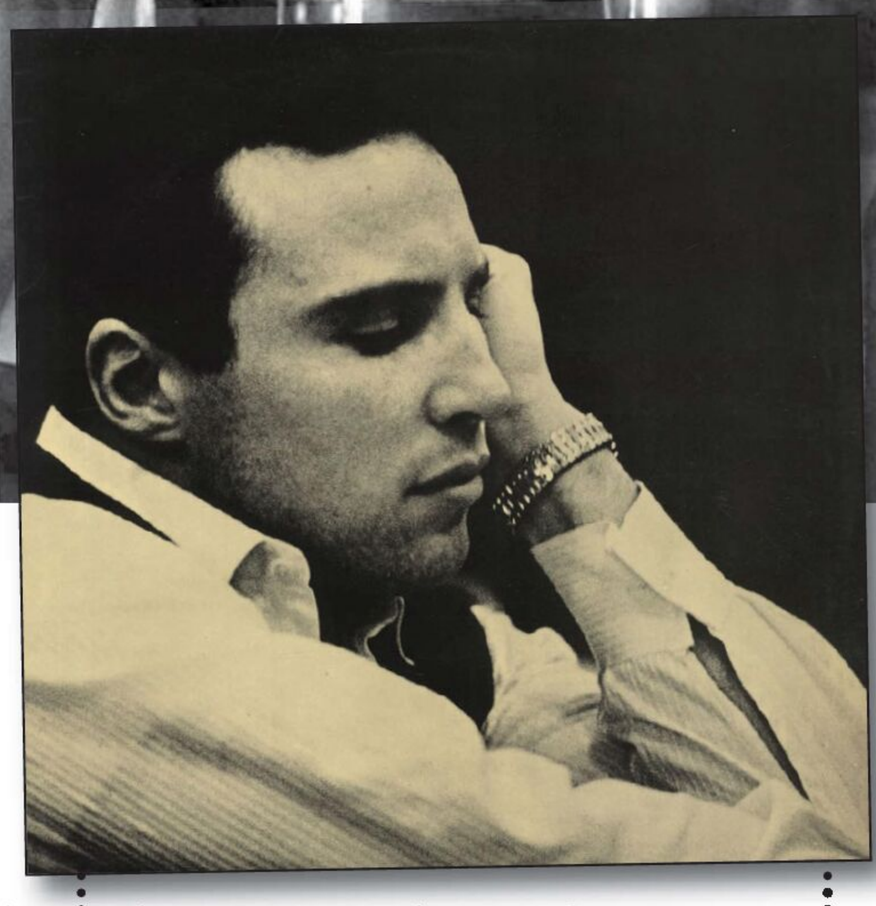
With 'My Friend Jack' potheads The Smoke, The Orange Bicycle were groomed by Monty Babson as the twin spearheads in the entrepreneur's search for pop stardom. They debuted in August '67 with two spirit-of-the-age Malone songs, 'Hyacinth Threads' and 'Amy Peate', both tracks simultaneously released as an EP in France with the addition of 'Competition' (co-written by ubiquitous session man Vic Flick) and 'Dropping Out', co-written by Malone. Notwithstanding the traditional harmony-pop element of their music, The Orange Bicycle were embracing the wispier end of the new psychedelic market. "We weren't hippies – that was a term invented by the media to ridicule us," Wil reflected some years ago. "We called ourselves heads. The whole mood of the youth at that time was very different to mainstream society. We weren't into aggression; we were into love and peace. They were very idealistic, naïve and innocent times. We adopted the teachings of Buddha. We did drugs to open little and big doors in our minds... It was a way of life; it had a message."

In November '67, the group released second single 'Laura's Garden' (backed by another Malone song, the playful

"The most amazing experience was conducting the first string section I arranged. The musicians were pretty drunk and it was late at night. I enjoyed it, but it was an eye-opener" *Wil Malone*







Wil and John Bachini on stage with The Orange Bicycle, 1969; August '67's French *Hyacinth Threads* EP; the Robb Storme & The Whispers '65 single pilfered by Pete Townshend for 'Substitute' – "I pinched it, we did it, you bought it"; 'Nicely', boasting an early outstanding Malone arrangement; Malone's mentor Monty Babson; '70 press ad

'Lavender Girl'). The A-side was a wispy psychedelic pop ballad with a vertiginous arrangement by Wil, finally moving into the territory he'd always coveted. "The most amazing experience was conducting the first string section I arranged, which was for Orange Bicycle. The musicians were pretty drunk and it was late at night. I enjoyed it, but it was an eye-opener."

By now Monty Babson and his business partner, session drummer Barry Morgan, were looking to expand their burgeoning business empire. They already had their own publishing company in Morgan Music and were now pushing ahead with plans to start their own record label and recording studio in Willesden. In fact, the record label – Morgan for mainstream releases, Morgan Bluetown for progressive pop projects – lasted less than 12 months before the plug was pulled, with Babson then reverting to short-term licensing deals with the likes of Fontana and RCA.

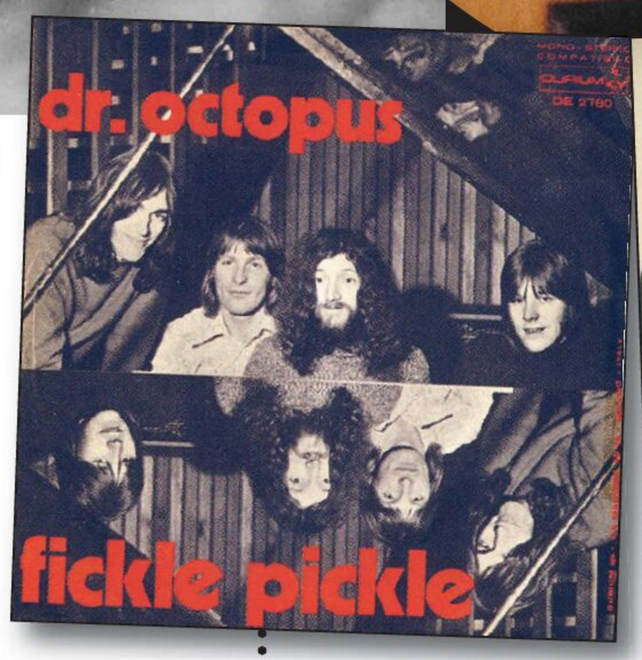
Despite that regrettably brief lifespan, the Morgan label was responsible for two Malone projects that reflected his rampant musical eclecticism and sly wit. Credited to The Wilson Malone Voiceband, the album *Funnysad Music* was a surreal mixture of *avant-garde* and easy listening sensibilities, with suitably eccentric versions of recent pop hits ('Penny Lane', 'No Milk Today' etc) alongside *Smile*-era Beach Boys sonic experiments like 'A Nice Day For Monks' and 'The Sun Is In My Tree'.

Quite who *Funnysad Music* – that most intriguing of contradictions, an *avant-garde* MOR album – was aimed at in '68 is anyone's guess, but Malone's venture for the Morgan Bluetown imprint had a more obvious target audience. Recorded with Morgan Studio engineers Mike Bobak and Andy Johns and credited to Bobak Jons Malone (why Andy's surname was mis-spelt remains a mystery), *Motherlight* was a progressive pop nugget, in a similar erudite vein to Procol Harum

Geoff Gill presides over the desk at a Fickle Pickle recording session while Wil and guitarist Steve Howden look in; Wil with feline friend; Pickle 45s

but without really sounding like anyone else (something of a Malone trademark). Recorded in late-night studio downtime, the disturbing dreamscapes of *Motherlight* were largely down to ringmaster Malone, who wrote and sang pretty much everything on the album. "That was fun," he'd subsequently recall of the project. "That was just us doing what we wanted to and just trying things out."

But while the Morgan label failed to make a mark, Morgan Studios went from strength to strength, with many members of the early '70s rock aristocracy – McCartney, Rod Stewart, Led Zeppelin etc – availing themselves of the studio's facilities. As a result, many of Monty Babson's erstwhile pop star hopefuls were pressed into service at the studio: The Smoke's drummer Geoff Gill was installed as a trainee producer, the band's bassist Zeke Lund was employed as studio engineer (after initially working as doorman), while classically influenced pop songwriter Danny Beckerman roamed the corridors looking for potential opportunities. He penned a one-off Cocker-nee pub-psych single, 'Joe, Organ & Co' / 'Railway Jim', credited to Barnaby Rudge and voiced by Wil Malone, with *Melody Maker* writer Chris Welch noting a vocal similarity to "that talented young gentleman David Bowie". "Not a lot of people had heard of Bowie at the time," Malone claimed many years later. "There was a style like that around. I based it on a Chelsea hippie-type character. I even did a Radio 1 interview as Barnaby Rudge."



Malone was left to his own devices by Babson, who came from a different musical background and was happy to leave things to his younger lieutenants, as Wil acknowledges. "Because Monty was into jazz and big band stuff, he really did not understand rock 'n' roll, and so he trusted guys who worked there, like me, to understand what rock 'n' roll was."

Meanwhile, Malone continued to work with Orange Bicycle. A September '70 album that appeared on Parlophone saw them adopting a gruffer, rougher sound in pursuit of mainstream acceptance, but by then the band was slowly fading away, their finest work having failed to push them into the premier league despite the patronage of Radio 1.

With Orange Bicycle suffering the musical equivalent of a flat tyre, Malone was primarily working with Geoff Gill and fellow Morgan employee, singer/songwriter Cliff Wade, who recalls Wil as "a genius and a mentor". One of the trio's earliest joint projects was a Marble Arch-style cheapo covers album entitled *A Melting Pot Of Hits*. By now, Barry Morgan was a member of erstwhile sessioneers Blue Mink, who'd hit big with 'Melting Pot': Babson immediately hatched plans to include the track on an album of cheaply recorded versions of other summer-of-'70 hits, craftily credited to Morgan Superstars + Blue Mink. In fact, Blue Mink's only contribution was the hit version of 'Melting Pot': the rest of the album was given over to the self-proclaimed Morgan Superstars, who turned out to be Messrs Malone, Gill and Wade. The trio went through the motions on Xeroxes of 'Spirit In The Sky' and a fabulously dismissive version of Lee Marvin's freak hit 'Wand'rin' Star'.

Projects like *A Melting Pot Of Hits* helped pay the rent, but the Wil/Geoff/Cliff triumvirate's main focus during this period (often with semi-detached fourth member Steve Howden, previously guitarist with Morgan blues-rock hopefuls Red Dirt) was the largely studio-bound Fickle Pickle, purveyors of some of the sharpest, wittiest and least successful pop records of the early '70s. Actually, they *did* have a couple of minor hit singles in The Netherlands, which saw them briefly leave their north-west London lair for a Dutch tour. Their European success provided the impetus for a Fickle Pickle album, *Sinful Skinful*, highly recommended to devotees of the first two 10cc albums and other early '70s smart-artists. "We feel that music has got far too complicated lately, and at the same time we don't want to be a bubblegum group," Wil explained at the time to a journalist on his local London newspaper. "We say what we want to say in a simple and effective way."

Parallel to these picaresque adventures,

"We feel that music has got far too complicated lately, and at the same time we don't want to be a bubblegum group. We say what we want to say in a simple and effective way" *Wil Malone, 1972*

Geoff Gill and former Smoke bandmate Zeke Lund (who engineered Fickle Pickle's records) attempted to resurrect The Smoke's name for two or three singles. Again, a studio-only venture, the '70s version of The Smoke was fleshed out to a four-piece by the involvement of Wil and Cliff. In truth, the shared personnel, pop hooks and stoned, *Monty Python*-inspired humour of both acts means that it's almost impossible to draw a line between the recordings of Fickle Pickle and that version of The Smoke.

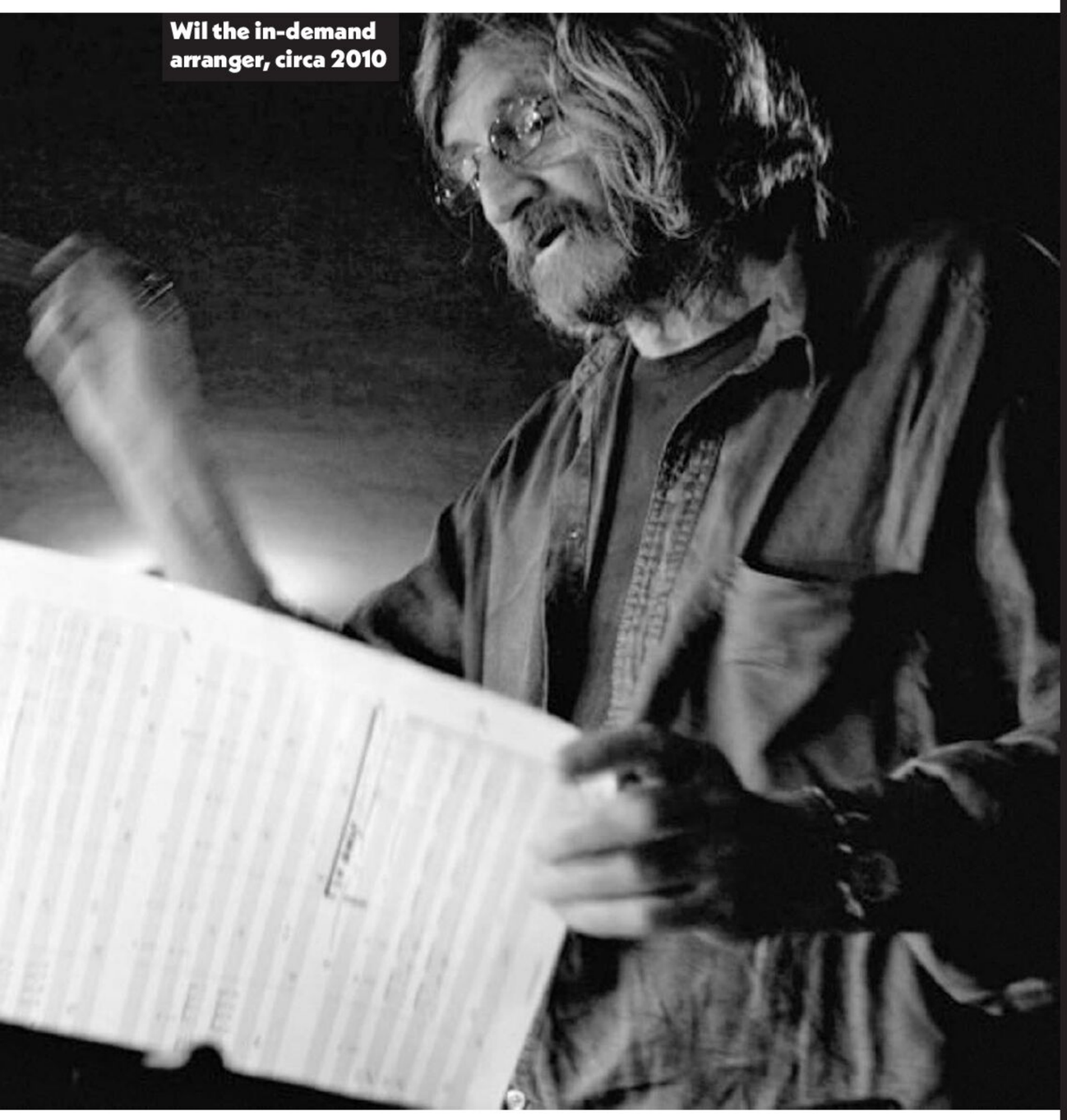
In addition to his work with Fickle Pickle, The Smoke and various Morgan waifs and strays, Wil regularly recorded as a solo act. In July '70 Fontana issued *Wil Malone*, a typically idiosyncratic supper-club/chamber-pop take on the singer/songwriter genre so in vogue at the time. The album has many admirers these days, but attracted little attention at the time beyond a fatuous *Record Mirror* review that claimed the LP displayed "some nice ideas which are ruined by mediocre arrangements". These days, Wil is philosophical about the album's reception. "It was not greeted lovingly at the time," he muses with commendable understatement. "I tend to think of it as an album that I brought home and played for me and my girlfriend, and that was about it."

But all things come to an end, especially when they're unsuccessful. By '72, Monty Babson was beginning to accept that he wasn't about to get rich quick from his stable of Morgan-based writers, performers, producers and arrangers. In fact, he wasn't even going to get rich slow. "Eventually it was not working out well for anyone," admits Wil. "So Monty let everyone go... the producers and other people..."

Ironically, that was pretty much the start of Wil Malone's career. He decided at that point to concentrate on arranging, and while that meant the world would be deprived of further left-field pop gems like 'Old Feet New Socks' and 'A Nice Day For Monks', nobody can argue with the wisdom of a decision that ultimately saw him go on to work with the likes of The Who, Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, Massive Attack, The Verve, Oasis and so many others. For some of us though, his most intriguing work will always be the pool of late '60s/early '70s recordings that he left behind in the early-pearly morning of his prodigious career... S!

With acknowledgements to Wil Malone, Cliff Wade and Record Collector

Old Feet, New Socks is out on 23rd January on Morgan Blue Town



Wil the in-demand arranger, circa 2010

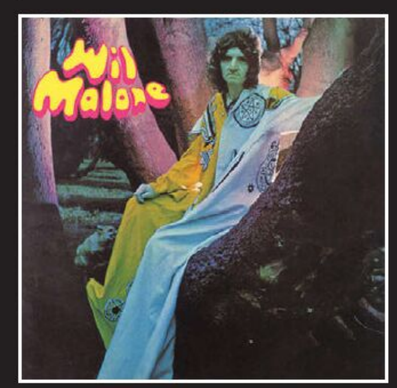
Wil Power!

Seven (and a bit) albums in four years? No problem. *ANDY MORTEN* gets in a pickle

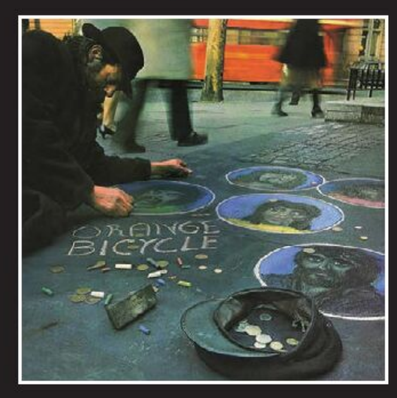
The Wilson Malone Voiceband
Funnysad Music **(Morgan, 1968)**
Bizarre, uncategorisable and largely instrumental, *Funnysad Music* gave Malone an opportunity to hone his arranging skills on the ever-encouraging Monty Babson's dollar.
Key Malone moment: A Nice Day For Monks

Bobak, Jons, Malone
Motherlight **(Morgan Blue Town, 1969)**
Three of Morgan's key backroom boys indulge in a heady brew of spooked prog-pop and stoned chants with surprisingly listenable results. Malone plays and sings almost everything.
Key Malone moment: House Of Many Windows

Morgan Superstars + Blue Mink
A Melting Pot Of Hits **(Fontana, 1970)**
Morgan co-founder Barry Morgan joined Blue Mink, whose international hit 'Melting Pot' leads a cash-in set fleshed out with nine Malone-fronted covers of period hits.
Key Malone moment: hard to say!



Wil Malone
Wil Malone **(Fontana, 1970)**
Home Malone! Freed of other players (bar string and woodwind) Wil concocts a unique take on the singer-songwriter album. Baroque arrangements set to stun!
Key Malone moment: I Could Write A Book



Orange Bicycle
Orange Bicycle **(Parlophone, 1970)**
Having entirely eschewed the West Coast-indebted flower-pop of yore, Malone and his long-time bandmates embrace Elton and The Band to the detriment of their own material.
Key Malone moment: Hallelujah Moon

Velvet Fire
Velvet Fire **(RCA International, 1971)**
Seemingly knocked off in a couple of days for RCA's budget Camden imprint, this mix of covers and originals further proves Malone's prowess as a multi-instrumentalist and arranger.
Key Malone moment: Sad Sailor

Fickle Pickle
Sinful Skinful **(Explosion, 1971)**
A *bona-fide* high watermark of the era, on which Wil and Morgan buddies Cliff Wade, Geoff Gill and Steve Howden serve up Beatlesque vignettes, stoned humour and shimmering proto-powerpop.
Key Malone moment: Saturday

Wil Malone
Death Line: The Original Motion Picture Soundtrack
(Spinney, 2001)
Recorded in 1972 for the subterranean UK horror movie, these two pieces (one main theme, one 17-minute string entitled 'Incidental Pieces') introduce primitive synths to the Malone toolbox
Key Malone moment: Main Theme

"I always thought he was unmanageable. He was a creature of intuition; he would do whatever he felt in the moment." Arthur Lee, at one with his sandwich, London, 1975

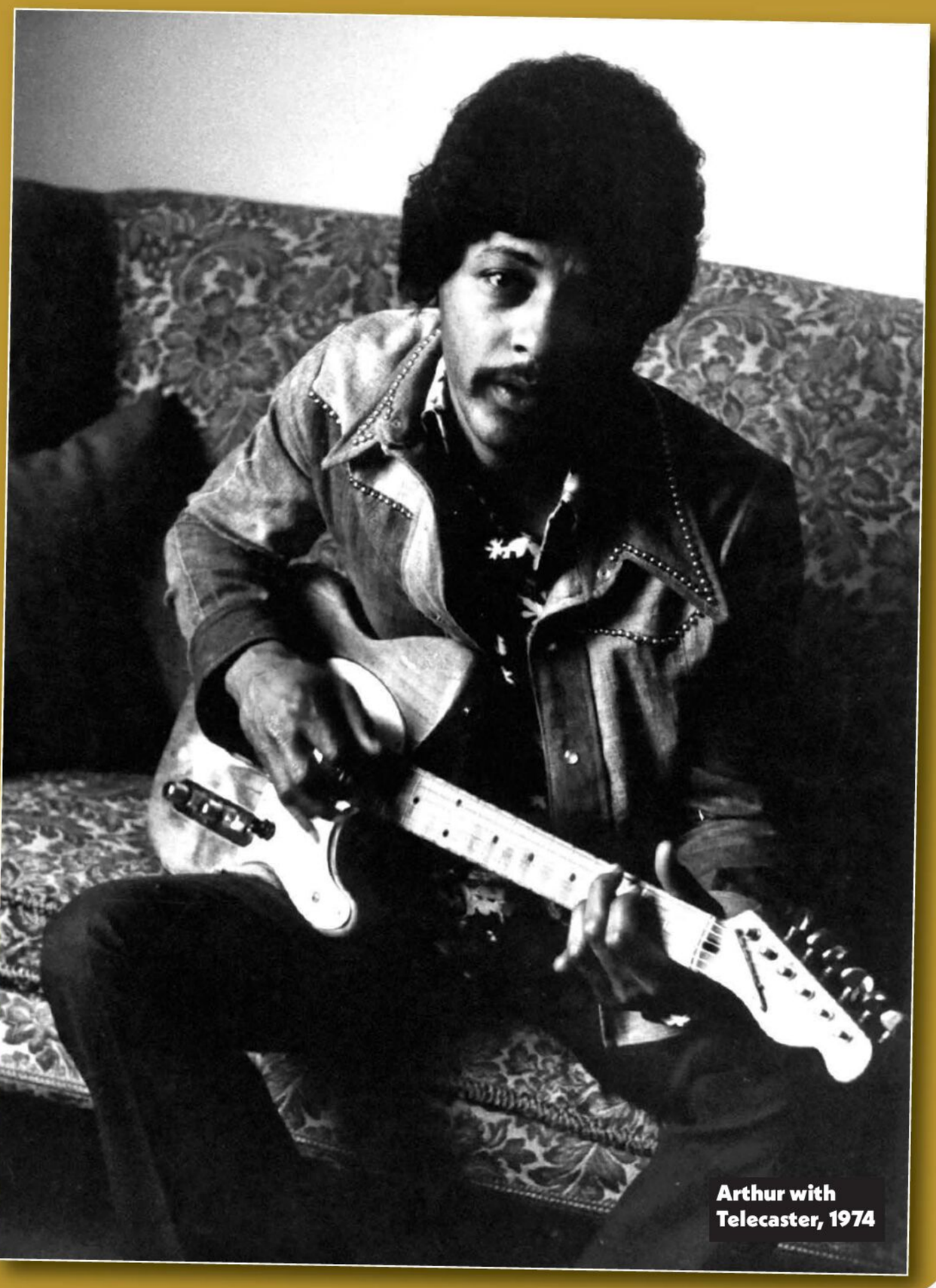
TOUGH LOVE

IN THE MID-70S, **ARTHUR LEE** STARTED OVER, MAKING A SUCCESSION OF MISUNDERSTOOD HARD-ROCK AND FUNK ALBUMS WITH OPEN-DOOR VERSIONS OF **LOVE**, COMING WITHIN A SNIFF OF SUCCESS BUT INEVITABLY BLOWING IT ALL UP. **MARTIN RUDDOCK** TELLS A STORY OF HIGH TIMES AND HARD KNOCKS.

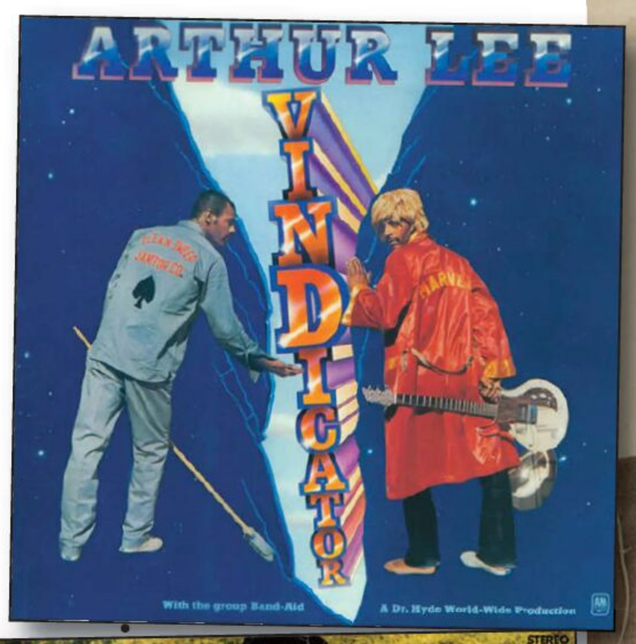
JOE BLOCKER INTERVIEWED BY JON 'MOJO' MILLS.

"I'M NOT GONNA EAT SHIT ON THE ROAD TO BECOME A SO-CALLED POP STAR"

It's 1972, and living legend Arthur Lee, late of Love, is holding forth to *NME*'s Danny Holloway on a couch at A&M Records' Hollywood offices. Arthur's in expansive, bullish mood, supping a rum and coke. To Holloway, this flamboyant Superfly-like figure seems worlds apart from the reclusive psychedelic doom prophet of *Forever Changes*. An abdicated King Of The Strip, Arthur's no longer rattling around in a run-down castle but presiding over a chaotic glass-fronted household and an army of dogs and pigeons.



Arthur with Telecaster, 1974



Arthur with good friend Jimi Hendrix at The Whisky A Go Go, LA, 1970; '72's Vindicator album and 'Everybody's Gotta Live' single

Over the last four years, Lee has walked away from the original line-up of Love and packed away their gothic baroque trappings, instead pursuing a brand of cranked-up funk-rock with a new, heavier band. Commercial success had eluded the original band, but their legend steadily grew amongst dark whispers about heavy drug abuse, jail time, even rumours of murder. Arthur kept working with the new Love, even travelling abroad, but the new heavy direction bemused fans and music press true believers alike. Now, for the first time, Arthur is going it alone. His debut solo album *Vindicator*, an eccentric but ballsy hard-rock collection, is due out on A&M. "Seasons change. Everything changes. I'd rather flow with the wind than pay my gas bill," he tells Holloway. Arthur's got some new young guys to drive his vision. It seems to be working out, at least for now. "I have everyone's part all planned out. Some people disagree with their parts. But I want what I wrote. That's why I've changed groups so many times. I try to get cats who want to participate in things I've written."

Many people participated in the second version of Love, convened by Arthur in August '68. It skidded off the rails after completion of *False Start*, their second album for Blue Thumb. In October '70, drummer George Suranovitch quit for the umpteenth time, replaced by Don Poncher, whose solid fatback groove helped anchor them. Lead guitarist Gary Rowles also departed, perturbed by Arthur and bassist Frank Fayad's heavy intravenous use of cocaine. "I'm surprised that Arthur and Frank survived that period," Poncher told author John Einarson. Former Sons Of Adam and Daily Flash man Craig Tarwater replaced Rowles. A brief tour of Canada and The Midwest did little for Arthur's dislike of air travel when the band's plane's wing nearly fell off while touching down in Missouri. "It was like the plane had been hit by a giant sledgehammer," recalled Tarwater.

With a planned European tour shelved at the last minute, Love entered Columbia Studios on Sunset in May '71 to cut a new album with the working title *Dear You*. By now their status as a band was somewhat in doubt. Since Arthur had taken control of Love and its management in '68, all new members had been hired hands. Having secured a release from Blue Thumb, Arthur signed with CBS as a solo artist, but took Love with him to record. The sessions stretched into one long coke-fuelled party, leading to CBS pulling the plug in July and eventually cancelling Arthur's deal in November. The new material was raw and punchy with cranked-up guitars and maximum aggression. The ghost of Arthur's old friend Jimi Hendrix lingered. *False Start* had dined out on a posthumous contribution from Hendrix on 'The Everlasting First'. The new 'Midnight Sun' borrowed heavily from Jimi's own 'Bold As Love'. "Jimi was such a good friend of his, they were very close, I think that affected him in a funny kind of way," says Joe Blocker, who drummed with Love from '73 to '75. "I think he also realised, 'That dude got a lot of shit from me!' And it wasn't animosity, he just wanted a bit of that cake, that's all. Sadly, it was not meant to be 'cause Black rock music got shut down after Jimi Hendrix – that was it." *Dear You* also featured the first version of Arthur's rousing 'Everybody's Gotta Live', an anthem for guys down on their luck. With the deal dead, Love finally disbanded. Tracks from the abandoned album and a clutch of Arthur's acoustic demos were belatedly released in 2009 by Sundazed as *Lost Love*.

For the rest of '71, Arthur licked his wounds. In many ways his body was now a temple, having become a staunch, near-militant vegetarian the previous year after repeated viewings of Fellini's *Satyricon*. However, Arthur's home at Avenida Del Sol was a 24-hour hub for coke craziness and animals running wild. He'd also just written a topical new song called 'Busted Feet' about falling off the roof of his house while on acid.

With his feet recovered, Arthur fell on them for a couple of solo shows at The Whisky A Go Go in January '72, attended by A&M A&R man Allan McDougall, who signed him within weeks. *Vindicator* was recorded remarkably quickly, and without incident. "Everyone has an Arthur Lee tale to tell, but I've found him no trouble at all," McDougall told Holloway in '72. Despite McDougall's glowing reference, Arthur pissed off a visiting A&M executive by throwing his fried chicken lunch into the parking lot, solemnly announcing, "I don't hang with no corpses." Two of Arthur's new songs were pointedly titled 'Hamburger Breath Stinkfinger' and 'Ol' Morgue Mouth'.

There was also still plenty of Dada madness happening at home, as new sidemen Charles Karp (guitar) and David Hull (bass) found when visiting their new boss. "It was full of these chicks, The GTOs, throwing light bulbs the length of the living room, and exploding them," recalled Karp. "Then Arthur says to me, 'Charlie, you want to dig some hot wax?' I go into the kitchen, and he's got vinyl albums burning on the stove. Half of me was horrified, the other half was thinking, 'Wow, this is great!'"

Vindicator (a "Dr Hyde world-wide production") was tougher than the CBS sessions, with more bite and focus. Most of the songs were refugees from *Dear You*. Arthur had been in the recycling game a while – '69's *Out Here* featured a stodgy remake of 'Signed DC' from Love's debut. *False Start* oddly included a live version of

"JIMI WAS SUCH A GOOD FRIEND OF HIS, I THINK THAT AFFECTED HIM IN A FUNNY KIND OF WAY. I THINK HE ALSO REALISED, **'THAT DUDE GOT A LOT OF SHIT FROM ME!'** AND IT WASN'T ANIMOSITY, HE JUST WANTED A BIT OF THAT CAKE, THAT'S ALL" **JOE BLOCKER**

Arthur in reflective mood in the LA sunshine, 1973

'Stand Out' from *Out Here*. As the decade went on, the lines between album projects would only blur further.

Karp and Hull were joined by Poncher for most of the album, with the '71 Love appearing on three tracks. Both outfits were deliberately dubbed Band-Aid. After an abortive attempt at reuniting the classic line-up (sans Bryan MacLean) in late '69, Arthur had tried again in early '72. Thanks to Elektra's '71 reissue of *Forever Changes*, music press plaudits and a new generation of fans were swelling in tandem. It seemed a no-brainer, but the others were wary. "I'd like to put the original group back together. I tried to get them signed to A&M but they weren't interested," he told Holloway. "I'm going to sign Love to somebody, even if I have to form my own record company. I've had seven albums in as many years with that group and I can't see letting it all just fade away."

Due to a clause from A&M barring his involvement if Love signed elsewhere, Arthur even toyed with reforming the old band without him and leading from a distance. "I don't have any intentions of participating, but I can direct, produce and write," he told Holloway. "I'd have to get someone to sing. It'd be groovy to go to London with the original group."

Vindicator was the best thing Arthur had done in at least three years, but its gonzo rock moves failed to find an audience and he was quietly let go by A&M. Band-Aid also folded and Poncher, in trouble with the law, moved on. Arthur put up his house for Poncher's bail before the case was thrown out. "Nobody else would have done that. He had a heart," Poncher told John Einarson.

Arthur entered '73 without a regular band but rallied when he signed to *Hair* producer Michael Butler's new Buffalo label. It was his fifth record company in four years, but Arthur was energised by the new, all-Black line-up of Love he'd formed. Old friend Robert Rozelle joined on bass, and Melvan Whittington, his bandmate from Little Richard's road band, signed up on guitar. "He's a really outtasite cat," Arthur told *ZigZag*'s John Tobler in '74. "Johnny Echols was a good guitar player, still is, but Melvin *(sic)* is capable of being a Jimi Hendrix on the guitar. I mean, I ain't hung around with this cat for a year for nothing, man."

On drums was Joe Blocker, who first met Arthur around '66. "The first time I ever met Arthur was when my cousins were babysitting me and they said, 'C'mon, we're going up to The Whiskey A Go-Go, our friend is playing there. I was probably 10, maybe 11," Blocker laughs. "So they took me through the back door to the dressing room and that's the first time I met Arthur. And it's funny because The Doors were opening for him – Love was the headliner."

Seven years later, Rozelle took the teenage Joe to Arthur's house. "I was going to California Institute Of The Arts then. My buddy Timmy McGovern (later of The Motels) was playing drums with Arthur. He was a good drummer but a good guitar player too. Arthur just wanted to do some different stuff. I think he wanted people around him at that time in his life who were more in tune with his musical tastes and his musical heritage. We were just going up there and playing music and smoking weed. There was a servant's quarters attached to his house, and that's where we used to practice."

Black Beauty built on *Vindicator*'s hard sound. "It started out with Arthur doing it on his own. We recorded probably five or six songs before there was any label involvement at all. And then Michael Butler came in. I liked him, he was just really cool. He gave Arthur some money, which trickled down to us," chuckles Joe.

Arthur was enthusiastic about *Black Beauty* ("It's a good album, man," he told *Rolling Stone*'s Steven Rosen in '75). "There's a song called 'Beep Beep', which is really tripped out, it's a hit song as far as what I hear on the radio. It's kind of a reggae song." The nihilistic 'Stay Away' bristled with proto-punk detachment. Elsewhere, Arthur was still recycling, reviving a slew of songs from the CBS era, including a blazing, trippy 'Midnight Sun' and weaving 'Always See Your Face' from '69's *Four Sail* into a cover of The Rooftop Singers' 'Walk Right In'. Unusually, Arthur chose a fiery live version of 'Product Of The Times'

Love, 1974 model. L-R: Robert Rozelle, Melvan Whittington, Arthur, Joe Blocker. "It's the best band I've ever had"

recorded with the CBS line-up at The Boston Tea Party in December '70 to end the album on. The tape, recorded onstage by Frank Fayad, had been passed on to Blue Thumb to master before Arthur left the label. It's thought that the live side of '82's *Studio/Live* comes from Fayad's tape.

"I'D LIKE TO PUT THE ORIGINAL GROUP BACK TOGETHER. **I TRIED TO GET THEM SIGNED TO A&M BUT THEY WEREN'T INTERESTED**. I'M GOING TO SIGN LOVE TO SOMEBODY, EVEN IF I HAVE TO FORM MY OWN RECORD COMPANY" **ARTHUR LEE**

Black Beauty got as far as an acetate before Buffalo suddenly went bankrupt. It would sit in limbo for years before High Moon finally issued it in 2012. Perhaps superstitious about Buffalo's collapse, Arthur was warily diplomatic to Tobler in a December '73 interview for *Melody Maker*. "Somehow, something went wrong... or maybe things went right? I don't know. I'm not worried about it. As a matter of fact, I don't even think about it."

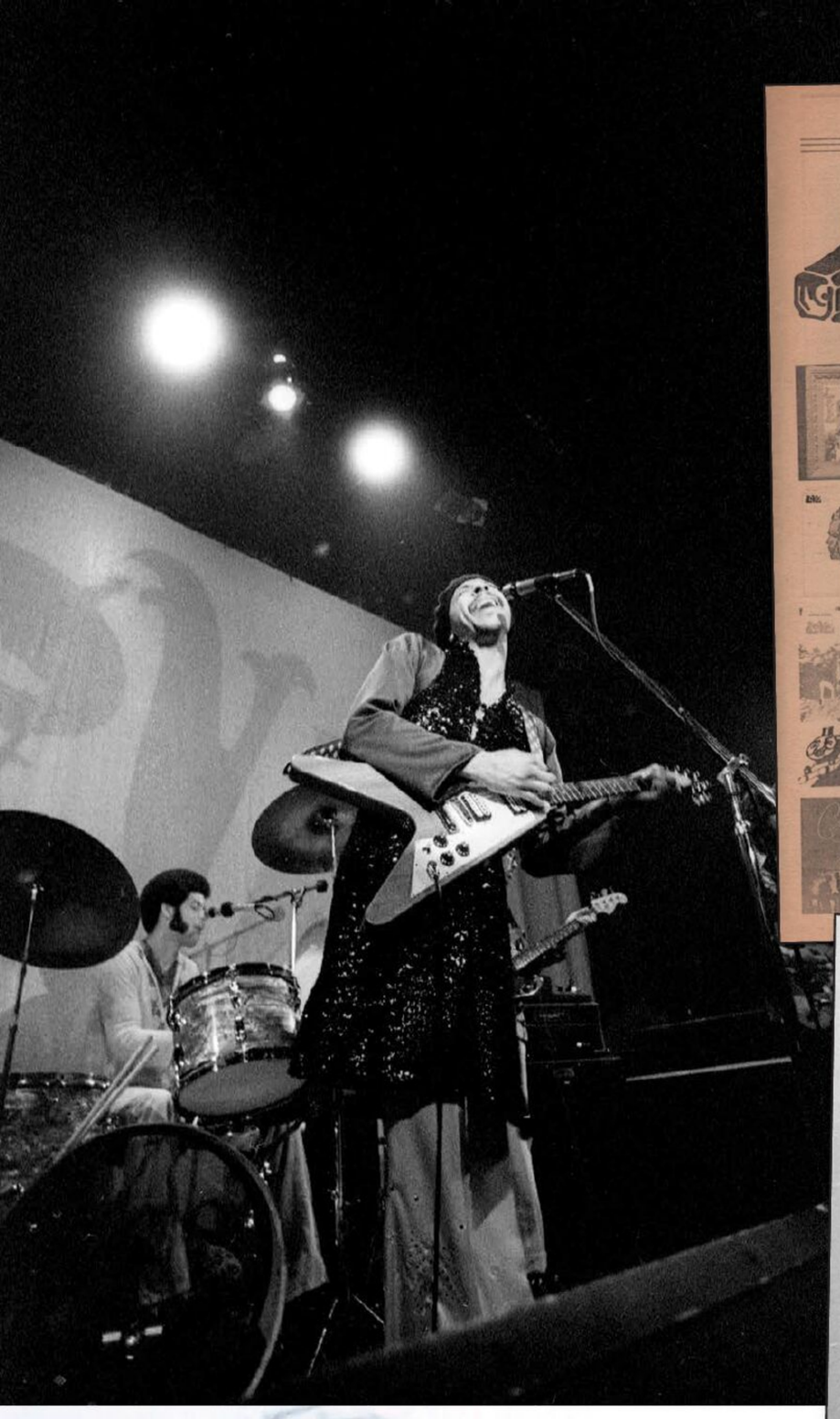
The '73 model Love had reawakened Arthur's passion for soul and R&B. "I feel that I'm capable of doing any type of music that I've heard in the past in this life," he told Tobler. "Soul music, rhythm 'n' blues, Black, beautiful, stuff like that, you know?" "Personally, I never felt like I was in the band Love," says Joe. "The only thing that made me feel like it was Love was when we had to play the old songs. He had to play 'Andmoreagain' and 'Orange Skies'. People would scream out those titles and he'd get pissed. He said that the reason he kept using that name was the promoters knew it, the people knew it, and the record labels knew it. He felt encumbered by that. He's like, 'I'm burdened with this shit.'"

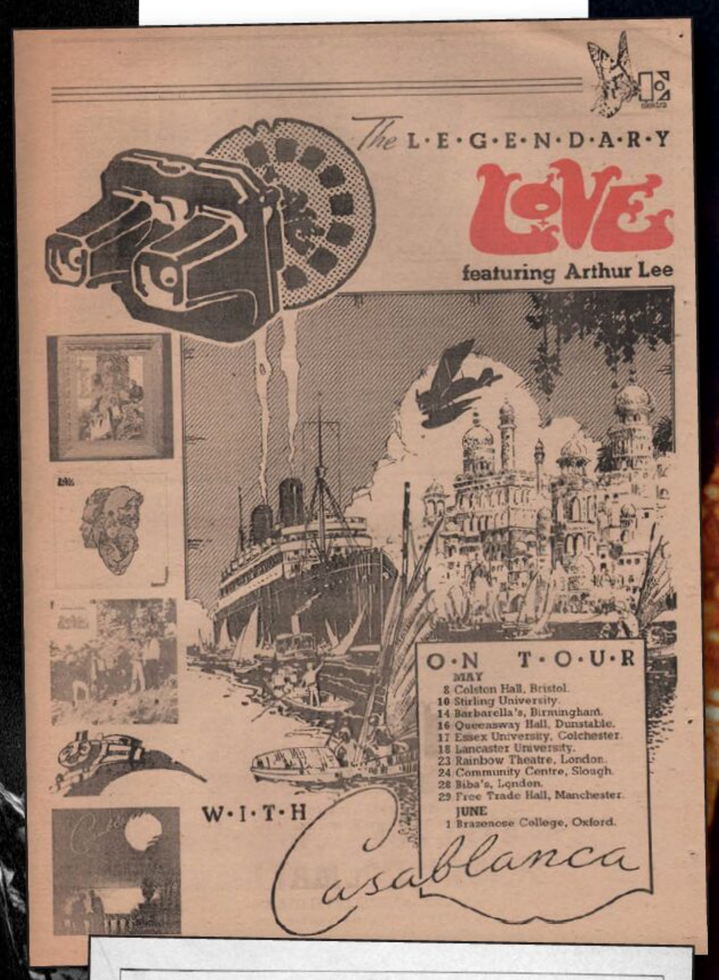
Early in the year, Love cut Arthur's main title theme to Gordon Parks Jr's Blaxploitation-tinged Western *Thomasine And Bushrod*. A slight return to the orchestration of *Forever Changes*, the theme owed a little to Woody Guthrie's outlaw ballad 'Pretty Boy Floyd', notably cut by The Byrds for *Sweetheart Of The Rodeo*. Then, an unlikely olive branch came from Eric Clapton, who lobbied manager Robert Stigwood to sign Arthur to RSO. Paired up with producer Skip Taylor, after years of watching the cents (and recording albums like *Four Sail* in a rented house rather than a real studio), Arthur found himself raring to go with a sympathetic producer and a staggering $100,000 recording budget. "I remember the look on his face," Taylor told John Einarson. "'It was like, 'Holy shit!'"

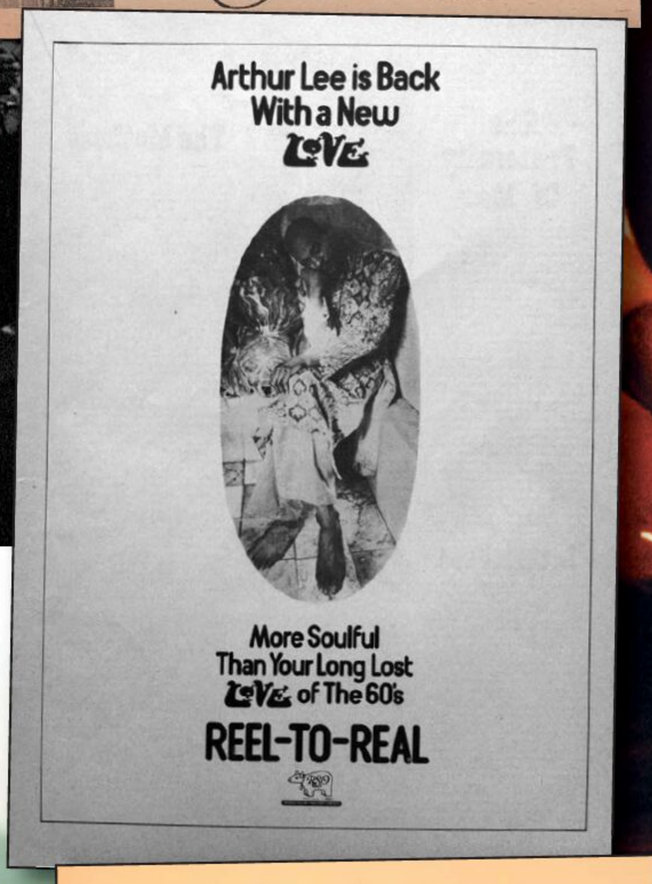
Emboldened, Love headed to Europe in May for a month-long tour, joined by new second guitarist John Sterling. "I knew John, he used to play with Eric Burdon. He fit in well," says Joe. "When we landed in London, they picked us up in Daimler Benz limousines and put us up in really nice places."

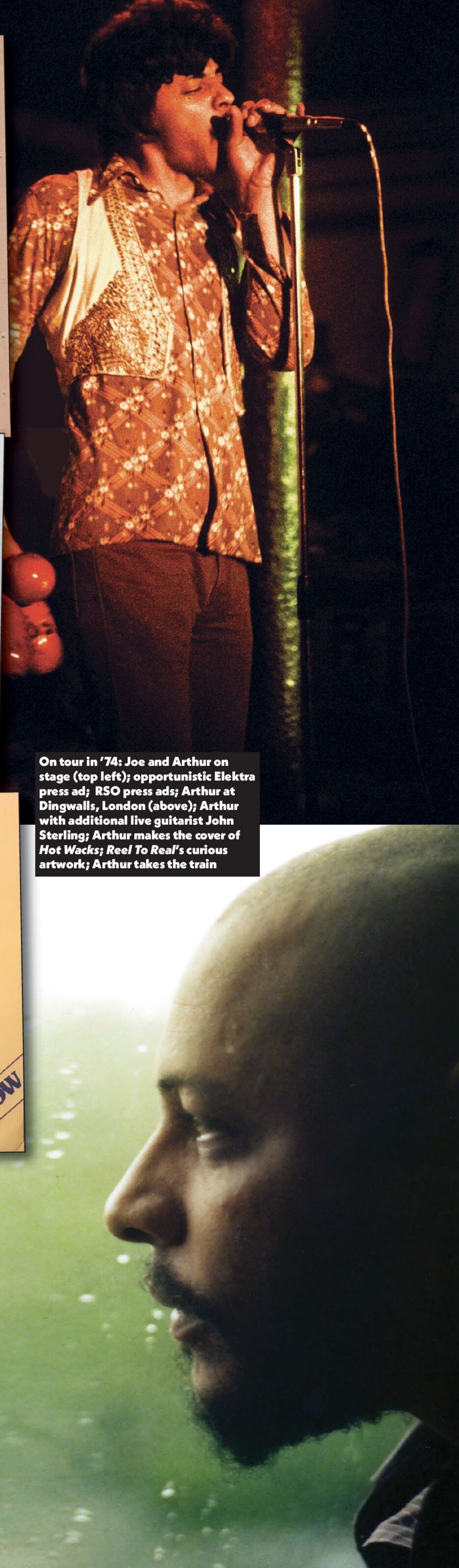
Returning to LA, they returned to work at The Record Plant, but Robert Rozelle, fed up of the "madness around Arthur" bowed out during the sessions, replaced by Sherwood Akuna. With more money came other players and a few ruffled feathers. Whittington was put out when the likes of Harvey Mandel and Buzzy Feiten overdubbed guitar parts. Conga player Herman McCormack was brought in, and a session horn section. "Arthur was focused on *Reel To Real*," says Joe. "We'd be recording and he'd say, 'Oh man I want some horns on here', and sing the horn part just so he had it on tape."

Reel To Real has always had a chequered relationship with die-hard Love fans struggling to reconcile its soul influences with the man behind *Forever Changes* and *Da Capo*. "There was no Love after '68, '69," says Joe, firmly. "Everything after that is Arthur using the name to get work. He said that himself. And that's part of the







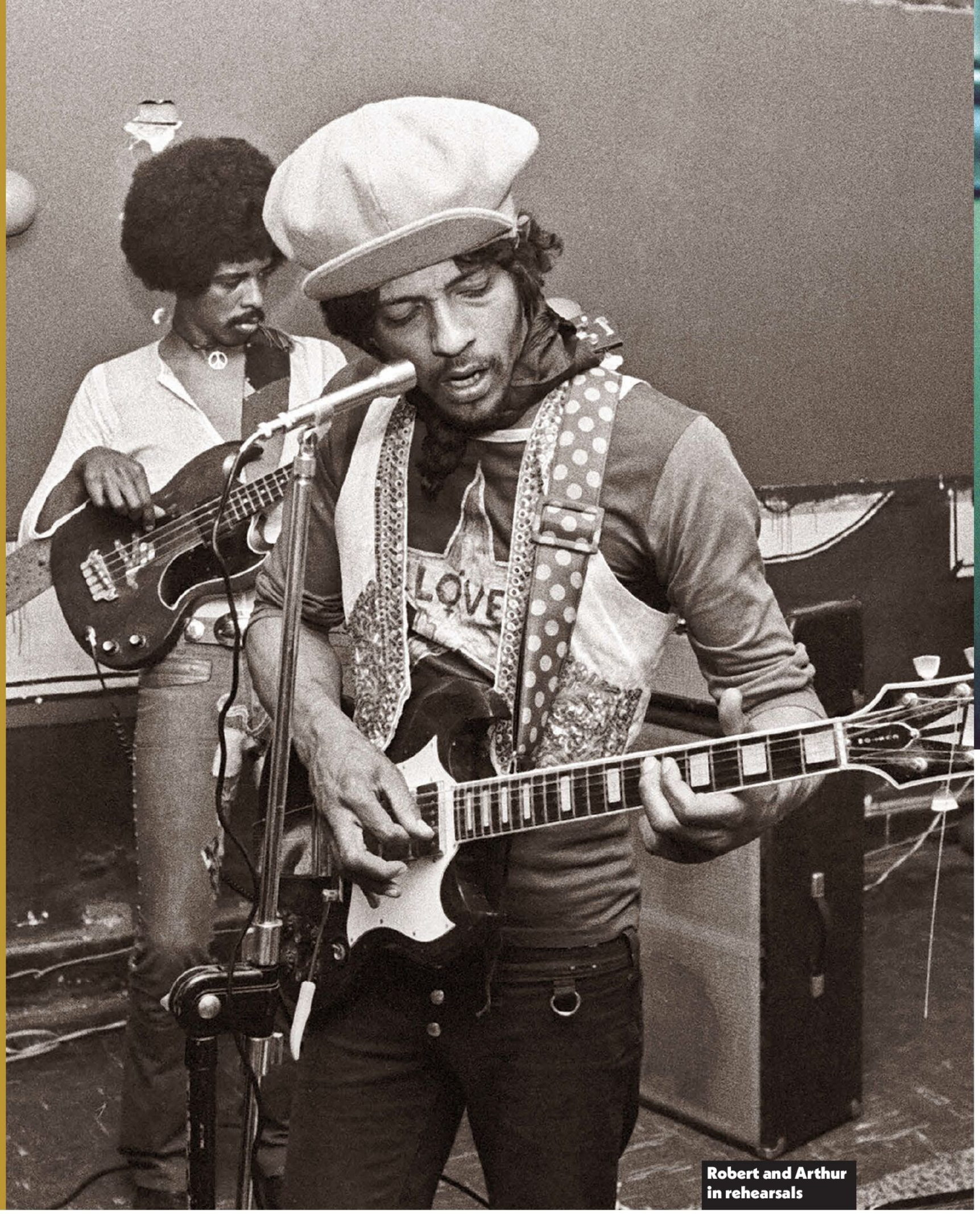


On tour in '74: Joe and Arthur on stage (top left); opportunistic Elektra press ad; RSO press ads; Arthur at Dingwalls, London (above); Arthur with additional live guitarist John Sterling; Arthur makes the cover of *Hot Wacks*; *Reel To Real*'s curious artwork; Arthur takes the train

MAYBE THE PEOPLE WOULD... JUST STOP BOTHERING ME

During the *Reel To Real* era, the band crossed paths with a lot of famous visitors, both at home and in studio. Some came to hang out, some to pay homage but Arthur Lee was uniformly unimpressed. "I remember once, Melvan [Whittington, guitar] and I and probably Sherwood [Akuna, bass] were sitting up in my house just jamming as we did daily," recalls Joe Blocker. "There's a buzz at the gate, I go to the intercom and answer. British voice. 'It's Led Zeppelin, mate.' I think it's some of my friends bullshitting me, I buzz them in. Limousine pulls up, window comes down – it's Robert Plant, John Paul Jones and Jimmy Page. 'Man, do you play with Arthur, is he here?' So I go round the side of the house with the crazy-ass afghans in the yard, go in the house, Arthur's sat on the couch. 'Arthur, those guys from Led Zeppelin are here, they wanna meet you.' He did not miss a beat. 'Fuck them dudes, man.'"

A delegation of Hollywood Vampires was given similar short shrift when they stopped by The Record Plant. "What they used to call The Jim Keltner Fan Club was at The Record Plant – that's John Lennon, Harry Nilsson, Keltner, all them guys were just in there getting high and fucking about for months," says Joe. "John Lennon was cool, he liked Arthur, Arthur didn't have time for him! 'Hey man, fuck him, he's drunk all the time.'" However, arguably the hardest partier of the club became a firm friend. "For some reason Keith Moon and Arthur, because they were both wacky as fuck, got along," says Joe. "He introduced us at The Troubadour, both nights. What a beautiful guy. He was at the *Reel To Real* sessions every day."



Robert and Arthur in rehearsals

reason why some folks can't relate. And I say, you folks are willing to accept that Chamaeleon-like quality from David Bowie but Arthur can't change?"

It's indeed a much stronger album than its patchy rep suggests – full of killer vocals, soul man moves (especially on a great cover of William DeVaughan's 'Be Thankful For What You Got') and Sly Stone eccentricity. The wacky 'Which Witch Is Which?' captured Arthur's offbeat humour, while 'Time Is Like A River' channelled Al Green to great effect. "I'm not gonna try and label it as R&B but it's pretty funky and that's what I was doin' a long time ago. No place like home," he told Rosen in '75. "He was on some different stuff, and he wanted to do some more soulful stuff where he could just sing," says Joe. "We were very well rehearsed; we were off that tour and we were tight. Me and Melvan moved in next door to Arthur so if we weren't playing in our house we were across the street playing at his."

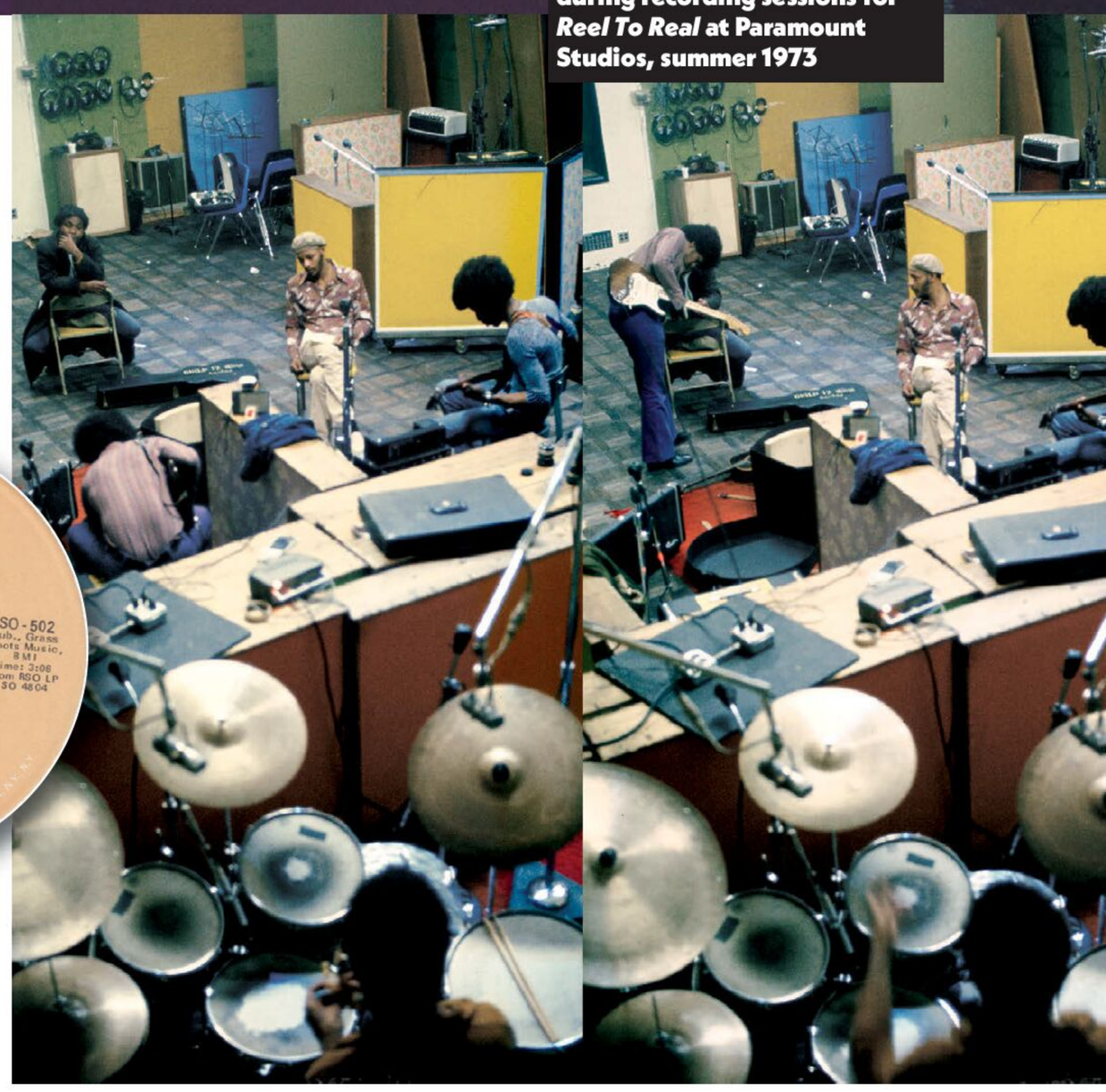
Arthur again fell back on older material – cutting 'Everybody's Gotta Live' for a third time, reviving 'Busted Feet' from *Vindicator* and 'Singing Cowboy' from *Four Sail* with a discofied shuffle. He even exhumed *Forever Changes* out-take 'Wonder People (I Do Wonder)' but left it on the cutting room floor. Despite this recycling, the performances were strong and committed. The sessions have always had a rep for excess, but Joe remembers it differently. "I think that his reputation is bigger than what it was. At that time Arthur had his binges, but when it came time to work, he was very disciplined. It wasn't that he wasn't getting high, it was more like a binge thing and then he would be clean, like really clean. Arthur was a control freak. And you can't be in control of things if you're high all the time."

Love joined Clapton's tour of North America and Canada in September. "It's the best band I've ever had," Arthur told *Circus* in March '75. "We thought we were on a roll," says Joe. "We were rockin' out. The musical background that we came from, we had to be able to play everything. We could play anything. Clapton used to stand at the side and watch the show. He particularly liked Melvan Whittington, who was nicknamed Melvan Wonder. He said to me a couple of times that he reminded him of Jimi Hendrix."

According to Taylor, after a standing ovation on the first date, Arthur promptly torpedoed his deal by launching into a Black Power rap about how he was a "slave" to a new owner, Robert Stigwood. Taylor claims the mogul immediately took him aside and told him he was buying out his and Lee's contracts. Joe disputes this account. "This is why artists have managers, but Arthur? I always thought he was unmanageable. He was a creature of intuition; he would do whatever he felt in the moment. Robert Stigwood did come to one gig, I'm not sure if it was Philadelphia or Madison Square Garden, but I can't see Arthur knowing Robert Stigwood was there and talking shit about him, that's just not him. He was too wary of his money, and he wasn't stupid! But something may have happened because that record got no promotion at all."

Whatever really happened, the two-album deal with RSO was effectively toast. Arthur told *NME*'s Max Bell, "To me RSO didn't push *Reel To Real* too hard, but in the end the band got the blame. See, the album didn't do shit in America and a lot of promises made weren't kept."

Arthur, Melvan, Joe and Robert during recording sessions for *Reel To Real* at Paramount Studios, summer 1973



"THERE WAS NO LOVE AFTER 1968, '69. EVERYTHING AFTER THAT IS ARTHUR USING THE NAME TO GET WORK. HE SAID THAT HIMSELF. AND THAT'S PART OF THE REASON WHY SOME FOLKS CAN'T RELATE"

JOE BLOCKER

Arthur told Tobler that he was plotting a new album once the tour was complete… with the original Love. "I've spoken to each of the members of the old group – Snoopy, Bryan, Johnny, Kenny and the whole bunch – and we're going to do an album. But I'm not going to disband this group I have now, because I really dig them." Arthur had considered bringing MacLean with him on the Clapton tour but decided against it. "The majority of the music we play is based around jazz and hard-rock type of things, and Bryan was more laidback and acoustic."

There would be no album, or reunion. Arthur slid back into sporadic gigging, and the band moved on. Arthur never worked for a major label again. "After that Clapton tour I was done," admits Joe. "I stopped playing with him for a number of reasons. We remained the best of friends, but in '75 I had my first child, and it became a matter of, 'I can't wait around for you to decide that you wanna work to make money.' He's like, 'You're too young for all that shit.' I'm like, 'You're too old for what you're doin'!'"

Arthur returned to Europe in May '75 with Sterling, the returning George Suranovich and new bassist Kim Kesterson. A long slump beckoned, lasting decades until his late career resurgence in the 2000s. But Arthur remained unrepentantly his own man to the last, telling Tobler in '75, "I'm not gonna eat shit on the road to become a so-called pop star."

"If you're gonna play the game, the game always has rules," reflects Joe. "I tell everybody Arthur Lee never lived an unhappy life; he lived his life exactly how he wanted to. He was a very kind, generous, intelligent person who just wanted to be left alone. Perfect Arthur Lee day: dogs in the house, nobody else, Chico Hamilton and Miles Davis playin'. That's it."

In a way Arthur finally got his reward late in life. "He told me once, 'I recorded *Forever Changes*, I wrote that record specifically so I could retire on it,'" says Joe. "He thought that it was going to blow him up to high heaven, put him in The Beatles/Beach Boys pantheon. He was gonna make millions of dollars and then he was gonna stop. It's funny, after he got out of prison he would come hang at my house. I remember saying to him, 'Well, looks like you were right. Here you are at this point in your life, making money off that record, which you never wanted to do.' He was like, 'Yeah, ain't that something?'"

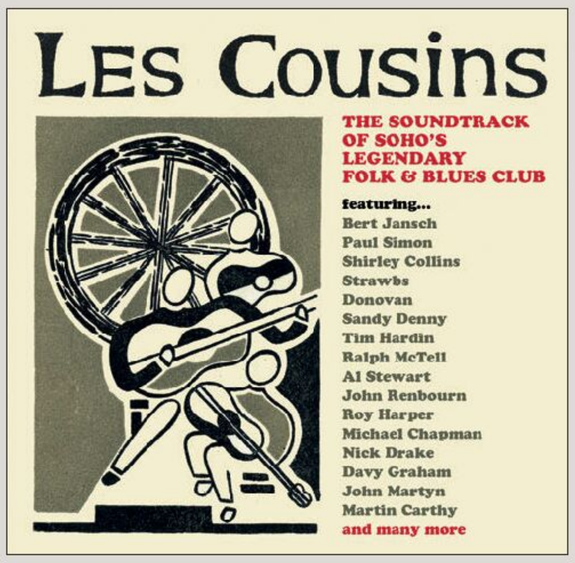
With many thanks to Joe Blocker, Jay Millar, George Wallace, Patrick Whalen, Zoe Willard and Jon 'Mojo' Mills

Just To Remind You is due soon courtesy of High Moon Records and the Arthur Lee estate

Reissues, anthologies and compilations

No Sleep Blues

HUGH DELLAR steps into the basement of a London institution that changed the face of folk music and beyond



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Les Cousins: The Soundtrack Of Soho's Legendary Folk & Blues Club

★★★★★

STRAWBERRY 3-CD BOX SET

Opening in April 1965 in the basement of a French restaurant in Greek Street, Soho, that had previously served as a skiffle club back in the '50s, the Les Cousins folk and blues club was to become incredibly influential for many up-and-coming singers and musicians and in its brief seven-year existence, it hosted everyone from Alexis Korner to Paul Simon, Nick Drake to John Martyn, Bob Dylan to Donovan. Named not after any kind of eponymous owner but rather the Claude Chabrol French film, the pronunciation was Anglicised (or simply referred to as The Cousins) and as it was unlicensed and thus didn't serve booze, the venue frequently stayed open all night, drawing in music fans of all ages, and in particular for those of a more experimental, forward-looking bent.

This mighty new 71-track collection commemorates the club's vital importance to the development of the underground folk scene and features a slew of famous names who trod the boards there alongside the far more obscure, with some tracks appearing on CD for the first time.

It's worth noting that the club opened around the same time that Bert Jansch's debut LP was released, an auspicious coincidence which points towards the growing appetite for earthy modern folk, much of it, of course, following in the wake of the seismic shock of the early Dylan albums. It's thus fitting that the collection kicks off with 'Running From Home', Jansch's moody, melancholic tale of how the generation gap drew kids to bright city lights that then began to scorch them. There's a sizeable smattering of more traditional sounds and ancient ballads getting reworked, so you get, for instance, AL Lloyd's fiddle-driven take on 'Jack Orion', the bleak haunted *a capella* rendition of 'The Banks Of Claudy' by The Young Tradition, and the otherworldly ache and shine of Anne Briggs' ancient voice on her bouzouki-backed 'Living By The Water'.

Visiting American troubadours are also well represented, with big names like Jackson C Frank, Tim Hardin and Dave Van Ronk nestled alongside the pure mountain banjo folk of cats like Derroll Adams, whose 'Freight Train Blues' shimmers and glistens like wild river gold. There are also plenty of more blues-soaked acts like Sam Mitchell, whose acoustic slide-driven 'Leaf Without A Tree' is a jaw-dropping howl of inner anguish that edges close to Kevin Coyne terrain, and Mike Cooper, straight out of Reading (!), whose 'Bad Luck Blues' effortlessly channels such country-blues greats as Blind Boy Fuller and sounds as if it could've been recorded 30 years earlier.

By '67, the club was well established and was very much changing with the times. The basement was expanded, the stage stuck in the centre and old church pews brought in to sit on. The PA system was state of the art for such a small venue, meaning acts could play quietly and still be heard – and the walls were painted with acid-inspired squirls and whirls. Perhaps the most startling selections here come from pioneering acts like The Incredible String Band, whose 'No Sleep Blues' is clearly steeped in folk and blues yet also has a dreamlike, shape-shifting quality inspired by their early experiments with Dr Hofmann's "medicine for the soul".

From hereon in, things frequently get far freakier and we're soon onto the dense swirling medieval acid-folk of The Third Ear Band's 'Stone Circle', a cut that has more in common with Terry Riley than Pete Seeger, Kevin Ayers' lush and lovely flute-flecked 'Eleanor's Cake (Which Ate Her)' and Ron Geesin deconstructing Segovia in a space capsule on 'Two Fifteen String Guitars For Nice People'. All in all, a must-have selection.

"There's a sizeable smattering of traditional sounds and ancient ballads getting reworked, so you get, AL Lloyd's fiddle-driven take on 'Jack Orion', the bleak haunted *a capella* rendition of 'The Banks Of Claudy' by The Young Tradition, and the otherworldly ache and shine of Anne Briggs' 'Living By The Water'"

Paul Simon at Les Cousins, circa 1965

KEVIN AYERS

Joy Of A Toy

★★★★★

ESOTERIC LP

Kevin Ayers made many great records over his 40-year career, but arguably never surpassed his 1969 solo debut. All the ingredients of a perennial cult hero are here, including the gift for insightful, effortlessly melodic songwriting that could've made him a mainstream pop star, and the eccentric, experimental tendencies that made him something far more interesting instead.

It seems to open midway through a boisterous party on the title track, but you've barely had time to grab a drink before 'Town Feeling' hymns the morning after, Ayers lazily whispering caustic asides into your ear over David Bedford's baroque arrangements. The album is full of wonky pop classics subverted by discordant, *avant-garde* instrumentation and riffs, with Ayers alternating between a more together Syd Barrett and a louche hybrid of Bob Dylan and Noel Coward, excelling in pushing the prettiness of 'Girl On A Swing' or 'Lady Rachel' into the queasily grotesque.

Ben Graham

ARTHUR BROWN

Dance

★★★★

ESOTERIC CD

Two years after 1973's universally loved Kingdom Come album *Journey*, Arthur Brown returned with his first ever solo platter and polarised opinion. Nah, just kidding. *Everybody* hated *Dance*. Too poppy. Too dancey. Too not *Journey II*.

So here it is, complete with bonus Live At The BBC tracks and ripe for reappraisal nearly 50 years on. Still poppy, still dancey, still definitely not another *Journey*. And while I'm not crazy about the vaudevillian 'Crazy' or transparent filler 'Is There Nothing Beyond God', I'm going to be a Cnut against the critical tide and say I like it. I like the slow funk and reggae inflections, the soulfulness in Arthur's voice, those incredibly seductive Thunderthighs BVs (shoulda been credited, mind), the tip-top covers of 'Out Of Time' and 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place' and, yes, the all-out prog of 'Helen With The Sun' and the *War Child*-era Tullishness of 'Take A Chance'.

Peter Gallagher

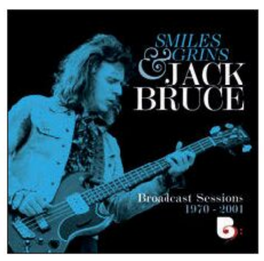
LISTEN TO THE
SHINDIG!
BROADCAST
ON MIXCLOUD

JACK BRUCE

Smiles And Grins: Broadcast Sessions 1970-2001

★★★★★

ESOTERIC 4-CD/2-BLURAY BOX XET



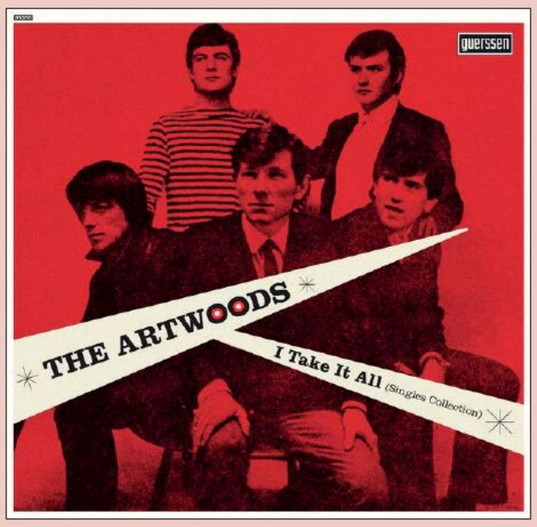
This wide-reaching box set collects together all the surviving BBC radio and TV broadcasts featuring Jack Bruce in a variety of his post-Cream roles as bandleader, on which he's heard sharing the stage with an impressive cast of fellow musical heavyweights.

Chief among this impressive archive of attractions are a 1971 Jack Bruce & Friends *In Concert* performance featuring Chris Spedding and Graham Bond, a '75 *Whistle Test* recording featuring Carla Bley and Mick Taylor, assorted *Jazz In Britain* broadcasts with Bruce in free-flowing trio mood accompanied by Jon Hiseman and John Surman, and an unbroadcast Lifetime *Beat Club* TV session from '70 with Bruce in the exalted company of Tony Williams, Larry Young and John McLaughlin. Illuminated throughout by Bruce's unrivalled ability to freely navigate the parallel worlds of rock, blues and jazz, *Smiles And Grins* offers an unprecedented overview of the rich diversity of his live work.

Grahame Bent

Art for Art's sake. The Artwoods in 1965

Lookin' Good



THE ARTWOODS

Art Gallery
I Take It All: The Singles Collection

BOTH ★★★★

BOTH GUERSSEN LPS

Despite being a stonking live R&B band, with mod sensibilities, packed with staggering musical quality – think keyboardist Jon Lord and drummer Keef Hartley – and a powerful lead singer to match, The Artwoods never received the acclaim they deserved during their mid-60s heyday. But Guerssen's double-whammy showcases a wealth of solid '60s tunes, interspersed with Chicago blues and jazz numbers, touches of freakbeat and glimpses of psychedelia.

Art Gallery, released in 1966, is an impressive slab of excellence, kicking off with a rollicking version of Lee Dorsey's 'Can You Hear Me', powered by Art Wood's growly vocals. His voice nearly cracks on 'Down In The Valley' and 'Don't Cry No More', while Lord's Hammond is complemented well by Derek Griffiths' guitar and Malcolm Pool's bass on a splendid version of Booker T & The MGs' 'Be My Lady'. But the true highlights are 'Keep Lookin'', with Lord's hammed-up sermon giving way to a swinging version of the Solomon Burke raver, their brooding take on Leiber & Stoller's 'I Keep Forgettin'', along with what sounds like a Small Faces-inspired rendition of Eddie Floyd's 'Things Get Better'.

The *I Take It All* collection gathers up all the remaining singles, B-sides and EP releases, collecting an eclectic mix of styles, ranging from hard-driving R&B like 'Sweet Mary' and 'I Take What I Want' (their only UK chart hit) to the popsike rumblings of 'In The Deep End', the jazzy mod-pop of 'Big City' and the moody soul of 'She Knows What To Do'. There's a smattering of group-penned organ-led instrumentals, including 'I'm Looking For A Saxophonist Doubling French Horn Wearing Size 37 Boots', along with the very odd 'Molly Anderson's Cookery Book', a jazz ditty, with a bizarre spoken commentary. Another stand-out is 'I Feel Good', featuring a fuzz-driven anthemic guitar, while the splendid 'Brother Can You Spare A Dime' – released as the their final single under the name St Valentine's Day Massacre – went nowhere, and the band members moved on.

Both albums come complete with exhaustive liner notes, with guitarist Griffiths offering copious amounts of insight and detail into every song they recorded. Fabulous stuff.

Dom Picksley

Caravan wanna do it. L-R: Pye Hastings, Richard Coughlan, Richard Sinclair, Dave Sinclair

TERRY CALLIER
Speak Your Peace
★★★★

MR BONGO LP

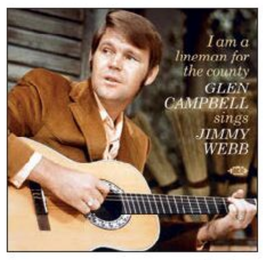
The seeds to Terry Callier's late career renaissance were sown when the singer reluctantly answered a phone call from superfan Eddie Piller. That call eventually saw Callier return from self-imposed exile with a series of critically acclaimed albums. Piller described Callier as "very spiritual and zen-like". This spiritual vibe very much comes across on the six tracks featured on this reissue of 2001's *Speak Your Peace*.

Callier's seasoned vocal shines on pastoral soul-folk opener 'Monuments To Mars', while Paul Weller duets on the poignant 'Brother To Brother'. The laidback 'Running Around' recalls the classic '90s Acid Jazz/Talkin Loud Brit-soul sound. The fractured beats and gentle acoustic strums of 'Darker Than A Shadow' add a modern sheen to the singer's typical folk-infused jazz style and the title track is a downright funky groove. Finally, 'Imagine A Nation' marries funk and exotic rhythms, with Callier scatting over a still relevant lyric proclaiming unity.

Paul Ritchie

GLEN CAMPBELL
I Am A Lineman For The County: Glen Campbell Sings Jimmy Webb
★★★★

ACE CD



Glen Campbell wasn't the first artist to perform Jimmy Webb's magnificent breakup song 'By The Time I Get To Phoenix' (that honour goes to Johnny Rivers), but it did mark the beginning of a remarkable sequence of hit singles for the pair, 'Wichita Lineman' and 'Galveston' swiftly following. And even though Campbell's subsequent collaborations with Webb are overshadowed by Webb's work with hellraiser Richard Harris, the pair continued to cut dynamite tracks as heard on this compilation that gathers every Webb song recorded by Campbell between 1967 and '82.

The hits are here, alongside most of mid-70s album *Reunion,* but it's the lesser-known cuts that thrill, like somewhat forgotten '69 single 'Where's The Playground Susie' (featuring strings courtesy of producer Al De Lory) and rousing ballad 'This Is Sarah's Song'. A treasure trove of honeyed melodies and sharp-eyed lyrics that not even a horrible rendition of 'MacArthur Park' can ruin.

Thomas Patterson

CARAVAN
If I Could Do It All Over Again, I'd Do It All Over You
★★★★

DECCA/UMR LP

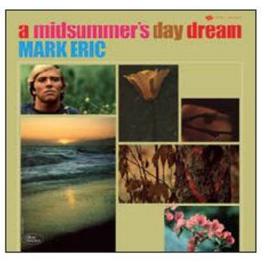
Originally released in September 1970, Caravan's second (and their first for Decca before being shunted over to Deram) is a transitional beast, with Whitstable's finest caught midway between the pastoral autumnal late '60s wistfulness of their debut and the fully-formed naughty boy prog-jazz of *In The Land Of Grey And Pink*. This beautiful facsimile edition sounds warm (with occasional fuzzy edges, but that's just Caravan, right?), and it has those lovely '70-era Decca labels too.

IICDIAOAIDIAOY (arguably the worse acronym ever) is still poppy but drenched in a polite, proggy anarchy – a '70s album that hasn't really figured out it's the '70s yet. Although the 14-minute portmanteau of 'For Richard' shows off Caravan's full mischievous ambition, it's all thrillingly there and up for grabs on 'And I Wish I Were Stoned / Don't Worry' with Pye's yelp, Dave's organ and Richard's drums colliding together to wondrous effect.

Martin Ruddock

MARK ERIC
A Midsummer's Day Dream
★★★★

NOW SOUNDS LP



Originally released in August 1969 with little promotional push, Eric's only solo LP is now considered to be a soft-pop classic and is being pressed on vinyl again for the first time since its original release. Wearing its (pre-weird) Beach Boys influences proudly, perhaps its mood was out of step with a country coming to terms with the Manson Family murders. It's difficult to resist now, however. Its wistful lyrics perfectly capture youthful optimism squaring up to life's realities.

Produced by ex-Animal Vic Briggs and recorded with members of The Wrecking Crew, many of whom had played on *Pet Sounds,* it shares many of *Pet Sounds*' themes: lost innocence and fading summers, and also buys into the California myth which The Beach Boys had so successfully established. Eric's story, beautifully captured in the liner notes, tells of a young man exploited by a cynical industry. Sadly, he died aged 59 in 2009.

Duncan Fletcher

ROBERTA FLACK
Lost Takes
★★★

ARC LP

Lost Takes, a collection of demos recorded six months prior to Roberta Flack's 1969 debut *First Take*, make their vinyl bow with this release, having previously cropped up on a limited anniversary edition of that debut.

There's the sparseness one would associate with early Flack, but not necessarily the lushness. That's no bad thing, as what we get is a previously

Continues over

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

waxin' celluloid

THOMAS PATTERSON checks out some spooky Euro scores, South American delights and Supermarionation action in this month's soundtrack column

Probably the only video nasty to also win an award at the Cannes Film Festival (Best Actress for Isabelle Adjani), 1981's **Possession** (★★★★, FINDERS KEEPERS LP) is your typical Berlin-set arthouse horror about marital breakdowns, physical abuse, psychotic doppelgangers and having it off with a slimy tentacled monster. Textbook. The soundtrack by Polish composer **ANDRZEJ KORZYŃSKI**, first reissued in 2012 by Finders Keepers and now repressed, is an excellent set of sparse yet surprisingly funky synth-led cues that land somewhere between John Carpenter and early '80s Radiophonic Workshop, the perfect listen for the slimy tentacle lovers in the house.

Speaking of the Workshop, next up is **CAREY BLYTON WITH THE BBC RADIOPHONIC WORKSHOP**'s **Doctor Who: Revenge Of The Cybermen** (★★★★, SILVA SCREEN CD/LP), the soundtrack to a 1975 Tom Baker adventure, recovered from dusty 45s and ¼-inch tape as the master tapes are long since lost. Much of Beckenham-born composer Blyton's score was left on the cutting room floor at the time, and the Workshop's Peter Howell subsequently added some electronic embellishments, a lot of which was also cut. All are restored here, and we have two competing sounds – Blyton's score is unusually analogue for a *Doctor Who* soundtrack, all stripped-back percussion and brass, whilst the Workshop contribute their typically beguiling burblings. A curious work of two very distinct halves (the Radiophonic half obviously our favourite).

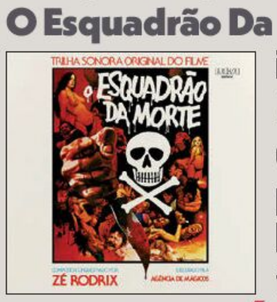
More childhood sci-fi scares with **RICHARD HARVEY**'s score to Gerry Anderson's 1983-84 marionet show **Terrahawks** (★★★, SILVA SCREEN 2-CD), a Sunday afternoon staple round these parts. If memory serves, the plot was something to do with earth defending itself against a wizened alien called Zelda, with Windsor Davies knocking about somewhere in the mix alongside a character called Kate Kestrel who moonlighted as a pop star when not fighting intergalactic androids. Another synth-led soundtrack, Harvey's work is suitably dynamic, especially on the main title fanfare, but we're really here for the electro-funk of 'The Zelda Rap' and Kestrel's histrionic ballad 'I Believe In Love This Christmas'. Eighties cheese of the most delightfully stinky kind.

From *Terrahawks t*o A Hawk And A Hacksaw (see what I did there?) with **Flux Gourmet** (★★★★, BA DA BING 2-LP), the latest from cult British filmmaker Peter Strickland. A director of consummate taste, Strickland recruited Broadcast to score 2012's *Berberian Sound Studio* and Cavern Of Anti-Matter for 2018's *In Fabric*. Here, he brings together both strands, throwing Roj (formerly of Broadcast) and COAM onto the soundtrack alongside Nurse With Wound, Strickland's own atonal group Sonic Catering Band and Jeremy Barnes and Heather Trost of A Hawk And A Hacksaw (got there in the end). You probably won't stick on the Sonic Catering Band's clanking dissonance too often unless you want to upset the neighbours, but the rest is a hauntological delight, especially Barnes' soaring 'The Funeral Table'.

Berberian Sound Studio is the tale of a sound engineer going slowly mad whilst working on an Italian horror movie, so let's turn to Italy for a trio from three of their greatest composers. **Alessandroni Proibito Vol 2** (★★★★, FOUR FLIES 5-45 BOX SET) is an ultra-limited second volume of 45s collecting **ALESSANDRO ALESSANDRONI**'s ahem, adult movie work. Seemingly left to his own devices, Alessandroni is clearly having fun here, mixing up sleazy lounge thrills, disco funk, cod reggae and erotic breathing aplenty on track 'Miss X'. Subtitled 'The Maestro's Hidden Songs For Cinema 1962-1973', **ENNIO MORRICONE**'s **Morricone Segreto Songbook** (★★★★★, CAM SUGAR LP) gathers 21 songs written for movies like *I Cannibali* and *Comandamenti per un gangster*, performed by artists like King Harvest and Morricone favourite Edda Dell'Orso. Ranging from western ballads to the breakbeat-heavy children's choir of 'Guerra e Pace, Pollo e Brace', this is of course marvellous.

Thirdly, **PIERO UMILIANI**'s **A Tempo Di Jazz** (★★★, SONOR MUSIC EDITIONS LP) is actually a jazz album rather than a soundtrack, but Umiliani is such a ubiquitous name in the world of Italian cinema that it would be churlish not include him here. The album dates from a '59 session capturing low-key swingers that land somewhere between bop and dinner jazz. Inessential but very sweet.

We'll quickly land on home shores for a perfect slice of British library music, and **ALAN TEW**'s **Drama Suites Parts 1 & 2** (★★★★, BE WITH LP), a fab collection of crime thriller cues from the mid-'70s containing 'The Detectives', a famously hard-driving theme that should be familiar to any *Sound Gallery* or *Two Ronnies* fans, before heading to South America for our final two. *Shindig!* hasn't got a clue what '75 Brazilian movie **O Esquadrão Da Morte** (★★★★, MR BONGO LP) is about, but the title translates as *The Death Squad*, it's got an excellently overwrought giallo-style poster featuring a fist wielding a bloody knife atop various bikini-clad temptresses, and a fabulous soundtrack from **ZÉ RODRIX E A AGÊNCIA DE MÁGICOS**. Rio-born composer Rodrix is a long-time favourite (not least for the fact that he looks like a cross between Lionel Blair and Bobby Ball on the cover of '73 album *I Acto*), and here he brings the heat with a euphoric set that veers between dramatic funk and mental Brazilian rhythms, with a closing cue 'Um Homem É Um Homem É Um Homem', an indescribable whistle-filled pop-prog number that, appropriately enough, sounds like the theme to Lionel Blair charades-based gameshow *Give Us A Clue* reimagined by aliens.



And last but very much not least comes the soundtrack to 1976 Venezuelan sexploitation flick **Sobre La Hierba... Virgen** (★★★★, VAMPISOUL LP) by Venezuelan pianist **PABLO SCHNEIDER**. Again, we haven't got a clue what the film's about (the English translation *On The Grass... Virgin* gives us some idea, mind you), but the soundtrack is fabulous, funky rhythms and hypnotic flute-led groovers like 'Amor En Llamas' jostling with saucy lounge numbers such as 'Le Vaganza' that all sound like they should be soundtracking Miss World circa the saucy '70s. No wonder originals go for around £300 a pop, so get it for a drum break-heavy song while you can.

unknown and rather groovy Roberta Flack Trio that deliver delicate up-tempo jazz renderings of, amongst others, Marvin and Tammi's 'Ain't No Mountain High Enough' and *My Fair Lady*'s 'On The Street Where You Live'. The stand-out is 'Groove Me', a rare Flack original this early in her career, sounding for all the world like she's accompanied by the great Vince Guaraldi. The only misstep is with 'To Sir With Love', Flack's too-slow torch song treatment shearing away the momentum and, ultimately, the melody of the frothy pop original.

Peter Gallagher

THE FOCUS GROUP
Hey Let Loose Your Love
★★★★

GHOST BOX CD/LP

Ghost Box's mission to reissue their classic early releases is going great guns. We've had Belbury Poly's hauntological staples *Farmer's Angle* and *The Willows*, Eric Zann's cosmic *Ouroborindra,* and now, after last year's 2005 debut *Sketches And Spells,* it's The Focus Group's sophomore outing that's next in line.

To all intents and purposes, *Hey Let Loose Your Love* is a collection of sonic interludes – a musical collage that mirrors Ghost Box co-founder, and face of The Focus Group, Julian House's incredible approach to the label's artwork. With turns focused on individual sounds, 'Clockbell' and 'Xylophone Signal', House also plays with jazz, exotica, electronica, folk, ambient, psych, library, just one "song" sitting amongst this instrumental sonic glory – the title track's cheeky nod to mid-60s British cinema. *Hey Let Loose Your Love* sounds every bit as beguiling as it did when it was first released. Available on dinky 10-inch vinyl.

Sarah Gregory

GRUPOS LOS YOYI
Yoyi
★★★

MR BONGO LP

Originally released on Areito Records in Cuba in 1977, *Yoyi* is now a sought-after psychedelic funk record with a growing cult following. It's the sole outing from Grupos Los Yoyi.

Composed, orchestrated and produced by Jorge Soler Leó, the nine tracks contain multitudes. With grooving basslines, Afro-Cuban drum rhythms, and an audacious horn section, *Yoyi* is a triumphant representation of the creative multiculturalism that many Cubans aspired to during Castro's presidency. Upon first release, the album was unable to reach larger audiences, even though it was conceived during a time when cinematic funk was finding wide acclaim. Both anticipating the looming '80s obsession with synthed-out monotony and reflecting on the funk that paved the way, *Yoyi* is an important listen. Check out 'Mi Pequeño Gran Paolo', 'El Fino' and 'Paco La Calle' for a sample of Grupos Los Yoyi's astounding range.

Tess Carges

Unlikely powerpop heroes Bread

Action Stations!

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Looking For The Magic: American Power Pop In The Seventies
★★★★★

GRAPEFRUIT 3-CD BOX SET

A couple of thoughts occurred as this writer played his way through this immersive three-disc set. One: despite the spate of worthy powerpop compilations in recent times, this one sets the new benchmark. Two: considering the array of finely crafted tunes on offer, it's hard to believe that powerpop was an after-the-fact collective noun for a bunch of bands that, in the main, failed. Sure, there was the late decade success of both The Cars and The Knack, and Big Star were critical darlings from day one, but outside the most devoted aficionado who remembers Bang, Athanor, The Scruffs, Jules & The Polar Bears or The Laughing Dogs? The good news is that, if you do, they are all here, and if you don't, well, they are all here.

The 76 tracks in this box are arranged chronologically, starting in January 1970 and ending in December '79, although strangely there's nothing from '72, the year that saw the debuts of both Big Star and The Raspberries. Fear not, both are represented, as is Alex Chilton and Eric Carmen's solo work.

Some inclusions will tug eyebrows skywards, such as MC5, Bread, Sparks, Blue Oyster Cult and Television, all of which were thought of as powerpop by no one in the world ever, but they *are* top guitar-driven tunes, so fine, let 'em in. Actually, MC5's set opener 'Shakin' Street' does sound surprisingly power poppy, while simultaneously sounding like Lou Reed sounding surprisingly power poppy. There's a welcome avoidance of the obvious – Todd's 'We Gotta Get You A Woman' chosen over 'I Saw The Light', the Groovies' 'You Tore Me Down' instead of 'Shake Some Action', Cheap Trick's 'Oh, Candy' instead of 'I Want You To Want Me' – and the use of Dwight Twilley's excellent 'Looking For The Magic' as the title track is a nice if unintended tribute.

Like all good anthologies, this will have you digging out old favourites and exploring new discoveries, and you needn't be a September gurl or a December boy to enjoy it.

Peter Gallagher

HAWK
African Day
★★★

LION PRODUCTIONS CD/LP

First, we hear a voice depicting how the day begins, "It's dark and still in the chief's village protected by the mountains of the great southern regions of Africa." What follows is a rather unprecedented epic – the 17-minute, intricate 'African Day Suite', a knotty blend of west coast psych-folk sensibilities and African rhythms on which driving percussive interludes and flute-driven progressive segments follow one another (with the quieter, most contemplative and stripped-down moments proving the most pleasant).

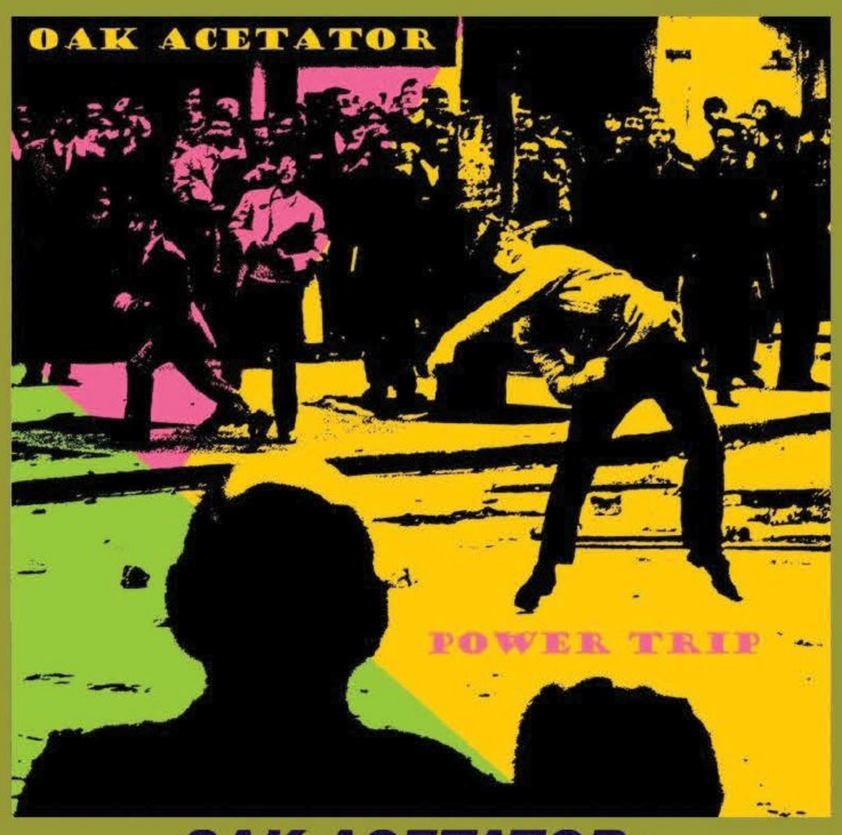
Johannesburg outfit Hawk released this, their first album, in 1971. It's a work whose charm mostly lies in its fusion-like willingness to have all the above-mentioned styles and moods co-exist, which gives the whole thing a sweet quality of hippie idealism. The manly lead vocals occasionally bring to mind the likes of Joe Cocker and David Clayton-Thomas. The closing track, a mellow, post-Woodstock reworking of 'Here Comes the Sun' is another notable.

Camilla Aisa

LISTEN TO THE SHINDIG! ON MIXCLOUD
Soho Radio

TWO NEW RELEASES FROM BLUE MATTER RECORDS

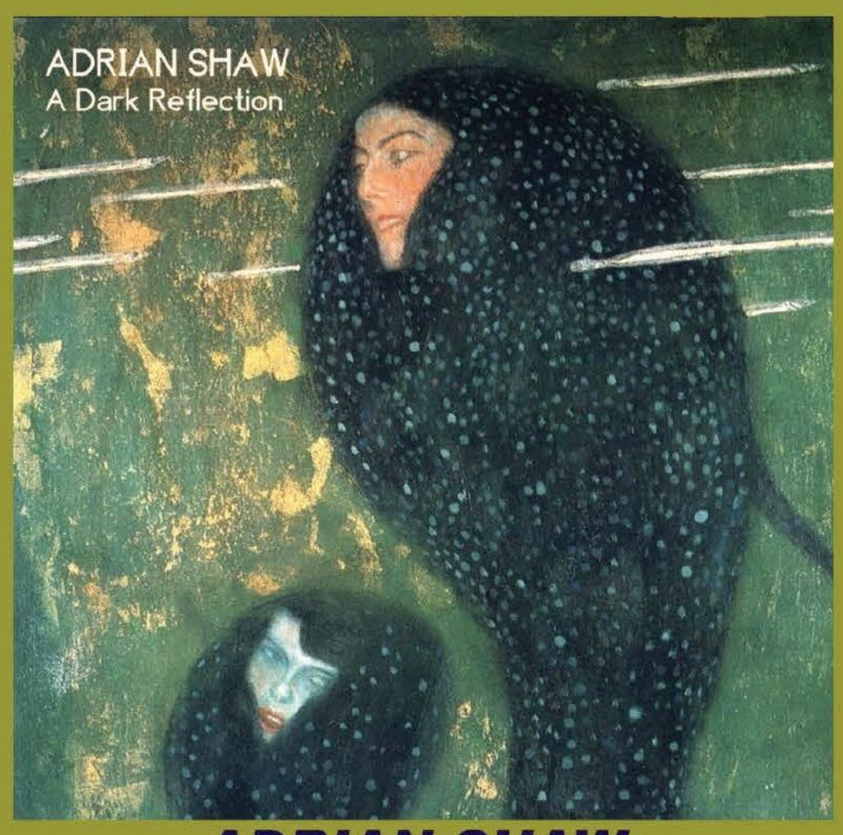
BLUE MATTER



OAK ACETATOR: P0WER TRIP. LOBE 009

Folkestone's very own psychedelic punk overlords finally get an album out on vinyl. An essential blast of brilliant, stoned-out, wry, hippy rage over a wall of guitar & synth. Imagine Johnny Rotten fronting a space rock band but more wrecked, and crazier!

Released on LP & CD January 15



ADRIAN SHAW: A DARK REFLECTION. LOBE 10

A brand new studio album from legendary bassman Ade Shaw. Famed for his work with Hawkwind & The Bevis Frond, Adrian has filled this album with his own brand of head music, psych, rock, & even a touch of lilting balladry. It's a wonderful return. Don't miss it!

Released on LP & CD January 15

www.bluematterrecords.com

Oslo Tapes

Staring at the Sun Before Goin' Blind (LP)

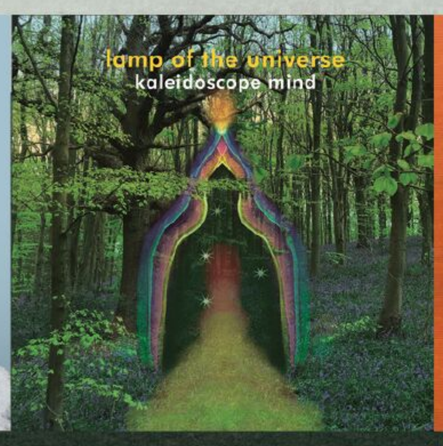
An Auditory Mirage of Disorientation and Restlessness Takes Center Stage in Marco Campitelli's Fourth Album, blending Post/ Art/Kraut/Noise, and Introspection.

Glen

I Can See No Evil (LP/CD)

Instrumental elegies with the urgency of unrest and a look beyond the pixeled grid.

"Turn the sound off on any news channel and let this be the score"
- R. Allen, A Closer Listen



Lamp Of the Universe

Kaleidoscope Mind (LP/CD)

New Zealand multi-instrumentalist and Psychedelic guru Craig Williamson returns with an album of classic tunes. Full of swirling effects and trippy vocal harmonies, this album touches the Psychedelic Psoul.

Diesel Cindy

Spill The Dirt (LP)

Old school '60s-to-'80s garage attack, in a contemporary manner and with an intense post-punk twist! The Athens quartet's debut brings the rock back to garage.

Cosmic Shadows

S/T (LP)

Debut album from new Athens garage disciples. Driven by groovy beats and lysergic leads and fueled by fuzz-laden, menacing riffs, it is a melodic, stomping, garage assault.

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THE LONG RYDERS
Native Sons
★★★★★

CHERRY RED 3-CD BOX SET

Probably not much need, at this late date, to tell you how marvellous this LP is, or why. Better we should focus on the treasure trove of additional material contained in this new edition.

Immediately, the first disc (the original album in full) is appended with the band's earlier, hungrier, punkier EP *10-5-60*. This majestic early '80s slab gets short shrift from many latter-day fans, and more's the pity. Your writer proudly numbers himself among the small-but-passionate minority who wishes that Sid Griffin had reached into his psyche's Inner Console and turned down the Gram Parsons knob just a hair (while concurrently turning up the Joe Strummer knob by an equivalent hair). But that opinion is moot in this case, for there's plenty for everyone here. Disc Two has 19 demos for both the EP and LP, each of them more visceral than the versions you've heard, and uniformly wonderful.

The real treat, though, is disc three's complete live show (at Dingwall's in March 1985.) 'Final Wild Son' will make you look in the back of the wardrobe for your fringed buckskin, and 'Join My Gang' will make you want to pogo. Do not attempt to pogo while wearing the buckskin. I think that's still not allowed.

Mike Fornatale

PEACH AND LEE
Not For Sale 1965-1975
★★★★

REMINDER 2-LP

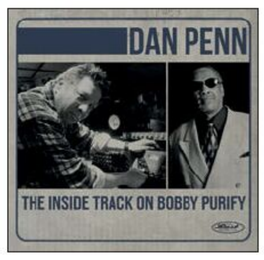
Sometimes releases spotlighting the collective work of hopelessly obscure artists feature tracks of questionable quality, but that's not the case here. Covering a decade of collaboration between lifelong friends Artis Peach and Larry Lee, the 27 previously unheard tracks gathered here offer moments of pure-pop perfection full of earworm riffs and effortless harmonies.

Obvious sonic comparisons can be made to The Beatles, Badfinger and The Byrds, but if you're a fan of Eric Carmen's early work then this is a rare treat as the chime, jangle and soaring vocals boldly reflect the powerpop attack of The Raspberries' rockier singles. Opening with the wonderful 'Long Way To Go', the band sets a template of clanging guitar, roiling bass and clattering percussion that, in a fair-minded world, should surely have bought massive chart success. Encapsulating the spirit that artists such as Jellyfish or Matthew Sweet would later adopt and adapt, this remastered set exudes quality.

Henry Hutton

DAN PENN
The Inside Track On Bobby Purify
★★★★

THE LAST MUSIC CO CD



Bobby Purify famously recorded the Dan Penn, Spooner Oldham penned soul classic 'I'm Your Puppet' with his cousin James back in 1966. In 2004, he reunited with Penn to record the album *Better To Have It.* This new edition couples 10 homespun demos, performed by Penn, with the transformative final versions recorded by the late soul star. It provides an intriguing insight into the art of songwriting, from initial idea to final execution.

The sparsely recorded demos provide a fitting template for a soul singer of repute to add their own stamp. As good as Penn's homespun demos sound here, nothing can prepare you for the show-stopping performances of Purify, accompanied by Muscle Shoals' finest musicians. Detailed liner notes reveal more information about the gestation of these southern-soul tearjerkers, making this an essential release for fans of Dan Penn and southern-soul music in general.

Paul Ritchie

Frat's the way it's gotta be. The Coastliners

Flash And Crash

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Pushin' Too Hard: American Garage Punk 1964-1967
★★★★

STRAWBERRY 3-CD BOX SET

To plenty of *Shindig!* readers, the track listing of this new box set will read like a fantasy jukebox. Many of the cuts here were regional or national hits back in the mid-60s and have been comped *ad infinitum* since the arrival of the original *Nuggets* double album in 1972, and there will surely be only a handful of you out there who are unaware of the hook-laden pop genius of The Remains' 'Why Do I Cry?' or Love's snarling, storming slash-and-burn take on the Bacharach & David gem 'My Little Red Book'.

Even a good chunk of the cuts that didn't break it big back in the day will be well-known to any self-respecting '60s head. The Sparkles' howling punked-out garage soul beast 'Hipsville 29BC' lent its name to a compilation of similarly twisted gems way back in '83, Rocky & The Riddlers' grinding primitive screamer 'Flash And Crash' was originally on volume four of Tim Warren's seminal *Back From The Grave* comps in the mid-80s, and The Coastliners' frat romp 'Alright' has graced various Texas punk comps for decades.

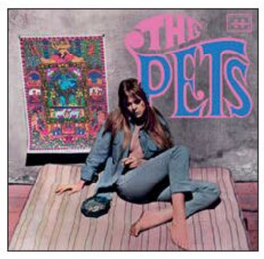
None of this detracts from the immediacy or power of the records, of course, and the glee, raunch and out-and-out psychosis of many of the songs here still burns through more than a half-century after they were pressed onto wax. The seismic shock caused by British bands exporting back to the USA cranked-up teenage white boy versions of black American R&B led to countless suburban kids pestering parents into purchasing gear and then retreating into garages or basements to cobble together basic set lists and wow the girls at the local dancehall before maybe cutting a single or two to sell at gigs.

Whilst this collection generally eschews the more acid-fried end of the spectrum, you do get The Third Bardo's oft-covered psych-punk classic '(I'm) Five Years Ahead Of My Time' and the intensity of The 13th Floor Elevators' first freak flash 'Tried To Hide' as well as plenty of lesser-known gems. One for long car drives – and the perfect gift to corrupt any young folk in your social circle.

Hugh Dellar

THE PETS
The Pets
★★★

MUNSTER LP



Venezuelan five-piece The Pets' self-titled 1968 debut survives as one of the rarest examples of Latin-American garage/beat. In terms of sound and overall style, The Pets exhibit much in common with the Peruvian garage outfits that were contemporaneously kicking up a storm in the land of the Incas.

A host of pop influences can be heard

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emerging through the haze of organ, fuzz guitar and harmony vocals – 'Toma La Guitarra' feels remarkably similar to David & Jonathan's 'Lovers Of The World Unite' while the band's magnum opus 'El Entierro De Un Hombre Rico Que Murio De Hambre' sounds curiously like a re-working of Tommy James & The Shondells' 'Mony Money'. Elsewhere The Pets serve up lively energised covers of the Stones' 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' ('Este Es El Fin'), The Doors' 'Hello, I Love You', Tim Hardin's 'If I Were A Carpenter' ('Si Tu Quisieras') and the Fabs' 'Revolution'.

Grahame Bent

THE PURPLE HEARTS
Extraordinary Sensations: Studio And Live 1979-1986

★★★

CHERRY RED 3-CD BOX SET

Covering 76 recordings – including the A and B-sides to all six of their singles – there's much to enjoy here. The Purple Hearts took inspiration from the original mod groups but endowed their sound with a punky power chord edge allied at times with an amphetamine attitude.

Tracks such as 'Beat That!' bring the kitchen sink dramas of The Kinks and The Who into a new decade and the album named after that song is universally excellent. The terrific choice of covers that appeared in their repertoire is also an indicator of their prime influences: Bowie's 'Can't Help Thinking About Me' and an unexpected take of The Equals' 'The Guy Who Made Her A Star'. With a slew of live material alongside demos and unreleased recordings, this is excellent reminder of the band's strengths. And any outfit that covers the *Scooby Doo* theme will always have a place in our hearts.

Henry Hutton

JAKE THACKRAY
Jake Thackray And Songs

★★★★

JAKE THACKRAY PROJECT CD

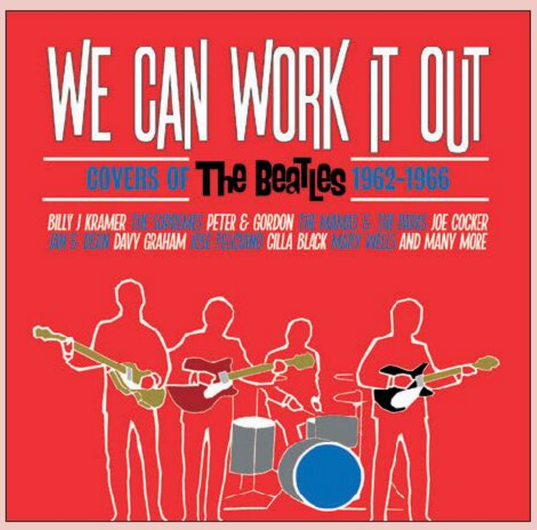
Jake Thackray's 1981 TV series represented something of a comeback for the 42-year-old Yorkshire chansonnier and Brassens aficionado almost absent from the nation's screens over the previous three years.

This album accompanied the series and proved to be his sixth and last. Ten tracks recorded live at John Dankworth's The Stables are bookended by two studio cuts, 'One Of Them' (*N-bomb* warning, but from a woke lyric) and the powerful anti-war song 'The Remembrance'. An uncomfortable performer in anything other than the intimate setting of a folk club or pub back room, his between-song banter is warm, convivial and very funny. His songs are mini-masterpieces of wordplay, not without controversy, his playing and delivery is distinctive and delightful, deftly and superbly augmented by Alan Williams' double bass and special guest John Etheridge. Here, a very singular artist, lauded and under-appreciated in equal measure, is captured close to his best.

Vic Templar

French pop star Dick Rivers tried his chances with a Beatles song

Only A Northern Song



VARIOUS ARTISTS
We Can Work It Out: Covers Of The Beatles 1962-1966

★★★★

STRAWBERRY 3-CD BOX SET

It took less than 24 hours for a cover version of final Beatles song 'Now And Then' to land after the single's release in November, and the internet is now awash with other versions, in varieties ranging from powerpop to heavy-metal to a typically redundant acoustic interpretation by Miles Kane. Same as it ever was, as demonstrated by this sterling comp that gathers 85 cover versions of Fabs songs written between 1962 and '66 (that is, from *Please Please Me* through to *Revolver*), in genres spanning folk through to soul to lounge and onto psychedelic jazz.

The earliest cover here is Kenny Lynch's chirpy version of 'Misery' from '63 (the first ever Beatles cover, released before the band's own version), whilst the most recent is a '74 take on 'Paperback Writer' from prog-rockers Tempest (featuring blistering guitar work from future Rutle Ollie Halsall). *We Can Work It Out* is actually sequenced in the chronological order that the Fabs' original versions were released, however, tracing just how quickly the band developed in just a short period of time. This means things open with 'Je Suis Fou', French rock 'n' roller Dick Rivers' cover of 'Love Me Do' and close with jazz saxophonist Steve Marcus' mind-boggling deconstruction of 'Tomorrow Never Knows' (we'll ignore vocal quartet The Four Preps' square novelty song 'A Letter To The Beatles' from '64, included as a humorous button on the set).

Highlights are manifold. Junior Parker's languid reinterpretation of 'Taxman' remains a slice of laidback cool; easy jazz duo Gary McFarland and Gabor Szabo shine some California sun on 'The Word'; Baby Cortez brings the bounce to a Hammond-led 'Can't Buy Me Love'; Charles River Valley Boys manage to turn 'I've Just Seen A Face' into a rootin'-tootin' bluegrass hoedown. A few numbers are either so faithful or so anodyne as to be of much value (I'm looking at you, Mark Wynter and your 'And I Love Her'), but mostly this is a worthwhile entry into a marketplace already stuffed with Beatles cover albums; we trust a second volume is in the works covering '67 to 'Now And Then'.

Thomas Patterson

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Bored Teenagers Volume 14: 16 Great British Punk Originals '77-82

★★★★

BIN LINER LP

Latest from Detour's Bin Liner imprint dedicated to bringing alive original punk-rock and related bands who, mostly, only reached the demo stage first time around.

Spunky young groups like Raw Material, Street Spirits and Carnage strut their stuff alongside Relapse, The Vamp and others who, for the most part, come across pretty solid and confident. There are one or two with suspect lyrics and themes that would probably get them cancelled in today's world. For this writer, the group that really stands out is Catalist, who hailed from the Glasgow area and didn't follow any of the usual spiky tops and gesticulation agenda, but whose stories and melody lines they manage to put across with a decidedly more mature pop-sounding angle. Their 'You Linger On' and 'Dear Lynne', both taken from a self-released 1981 single, are delicious and rare, as if beamed in from a different planet, and stick around in the brain long after the others fade.

Lenny Helsing

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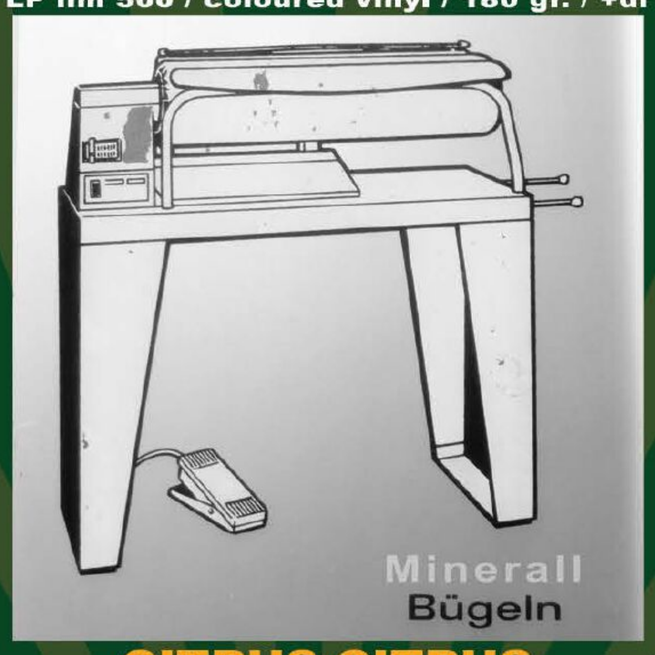

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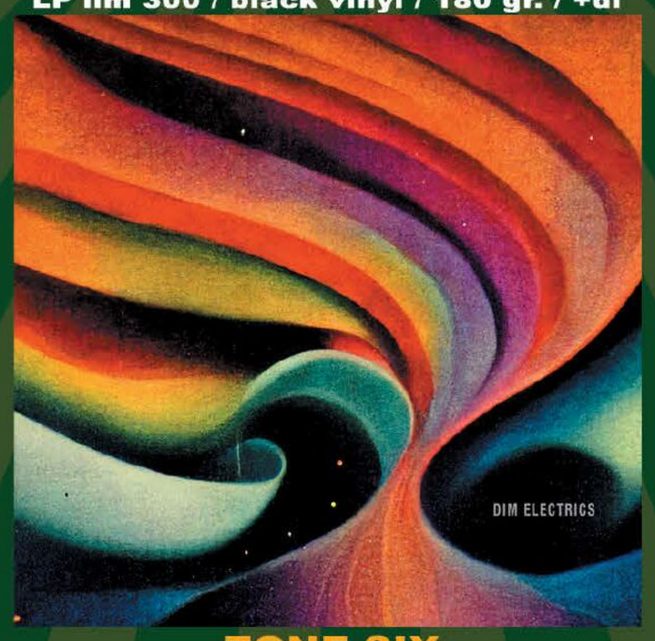

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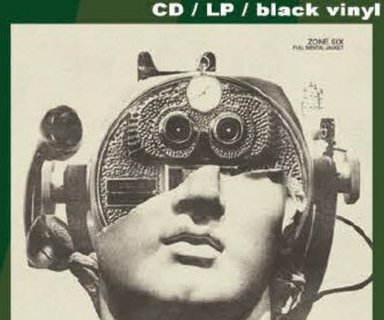

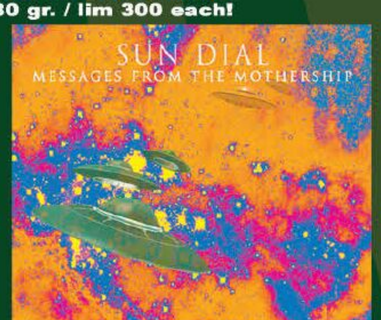

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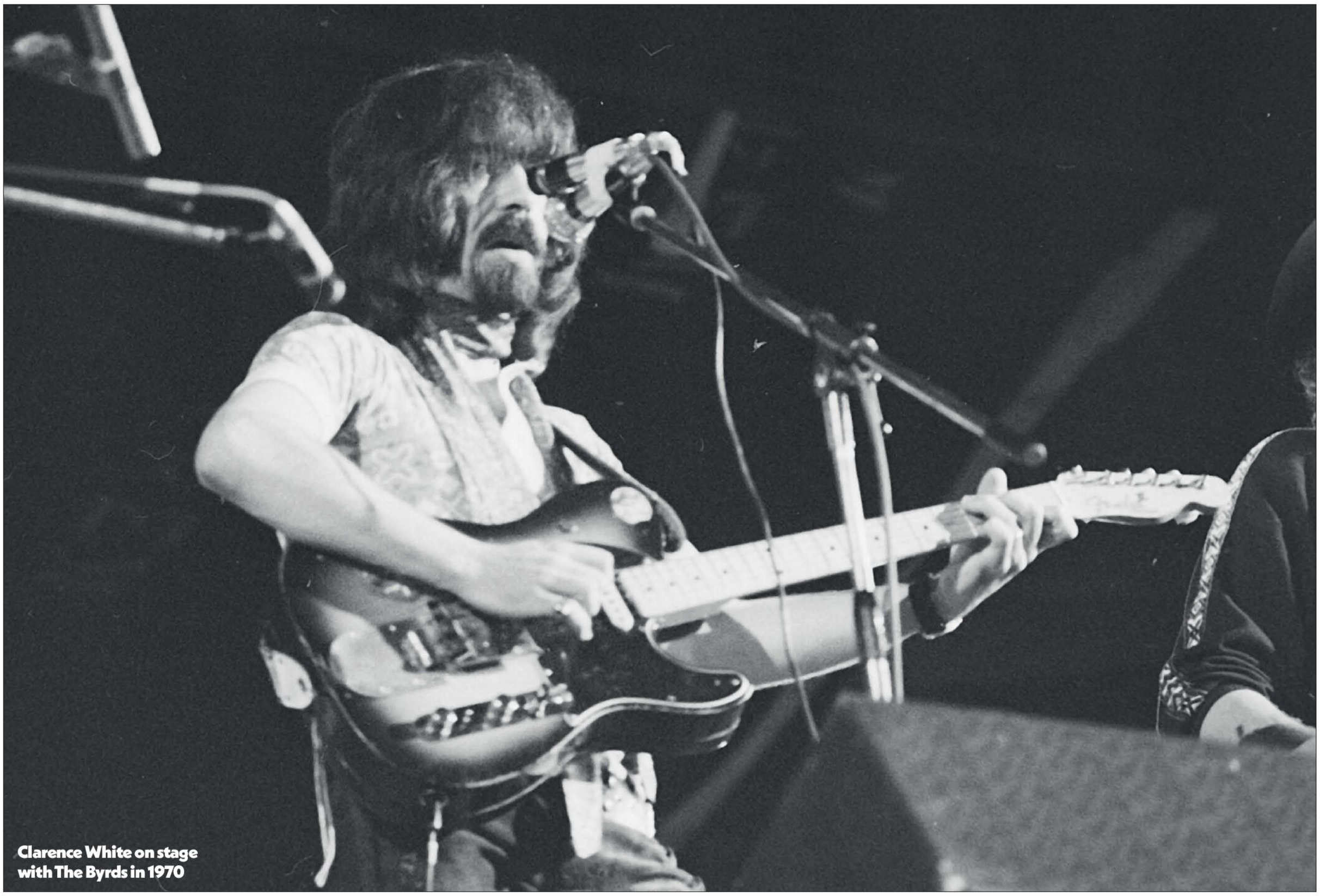

Clarence White on stage with The Byrds in 1970

VARIOUS ARTISTS
¡Chicas! Volume 3 1963-1982
★★★★

VAMPISOUL LP

¡Chicas! Volume 3 offers another great glimpse into the women-led music of '60s Spain. Though they made music in a time and place of censorship and constraints, the artists featured here subverted both socio-political and musical norms. Undermining record company impositions, artists would often put their riskier tunes on the B-side, hoping they'd go undetected; here we get to hear the dark side of the disc.

The compilation, which ranges from disco to Flamenco-pop to *yé-yé*, highlights the creative pulse that thrummed under dictatorship. As with the previous two volumes, *¡Chicas!* is never monotonous, never predictable. It'll take you on a journey from Los Antifaces' ever-catchy 'El Amor Que Soñé' to Suzie's Herman's-Hermits-meets-Françoise-Hardy 'Mirándote' to María José Cantudo's strange and sprawling Western-inspired 'Todo es Amor.' The voices aren't theatrical, sweet, or sighing; they're brash, edgy, and a perfect antidote to today's inanity. Long live the dark side of the disc.

Tess Carges

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Image
★★★★

BE WITH LP

If you've spent the last few years picking up library music reissues from Be With and their contemporaries, you've probably wondered what happened to KPM's 1974 entry *Image.* Hard to track down and populating many a want list, it's available at last, remastered from original tapes and sounding better than ever.

A disc of two halves, both of them deeply chilled, Side One kicks off with the title cut in all its laidback, lilting, loping-bass glory. A trio of tracks by David Gold and Gordon Reid follow funkily in that uniquely polite, British KPM way, before the side closes with the seriously upbeat, sparkling 'Phenomena'. Side Two is more cinematic, starting with John Scott's spacey fanfare 'Infinite Response' and the ponderous 'Static Objects'. Spare, gentle, earthy, the side ends with the almost too relaxing, hypnotic 'Gliding Through Clouds'. It should go without saying that this is an essential release for library lovers.

Christopher Budd

SONNY VINCENT
Primitive 1969-76
★★★★

RIPPLE MUSIC CD/LP

If you were searching for absolute proof that there's no God (not that I'm recommending you do this), then you probably need to look no further than the brilliance-to-success ratio of Sonny Vincent's career. That may seem excessive. But if you're hearing his work for the first time now, you're going to wonder.

Even if you have no interest in the dovetailing genres of "Heavy Early '70s Rock", "Proto-Metal" and "Whatever That Stuff Was That They Were Calling 'Punk' In New York City In 1974" (read that again), you would *still* have to wonder, objectively, about a few people who became massive stars right around the same time despite the fact that you *still* have never heard of Sonny Vincent. If he shows up on your radar at all, it's probably with The Testors. There's one of their tracks on this archival release, but most of it is from three earlier bands. All ferocious, and all great. Get this.

Mike Fornatale

CLARENCE WHITE
The Lost Masters: 1963-1973
★★★

LIBERATION HALL CD

This CD offers a mix of 14 rare acoustic and electric recordings from the late country-rock pioneer and legendary member of The Byrds and Kentucky Colonels. As many Byrds-heads already know, White was a much-loved and revered musician. Before his life was tragically cut short, he'd played on records by Linda Ronstadt, The Monkees, Arlo Guthrie, and Jackson Browne among others. At the time of his death, he was halfway through recording a solo album that would have accentuated his artistic reputation.

In the absence of anything else commercially available, this short set is a welcome primer but hardly exhaustive. Featuring mostly instrumentals, it covers snippets of White's career, from toe-tapping bluegrass rave-ups, through to his spell as a full-time Byrd. It closes with White trading his famous string bender guitar licks for The Everly Brothers on an alternate version of their country-tinged classic 'I'm On My Way Home Again'.

Paul Ritchie

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'Wig Out! Freak Out!', the latest compilation from Two-Piers, dives into the world of Freakbeat, Psych and Mod from 1964-1969. Pulling the cream of tracks from the UK & US Freakbeat and Garage scenes of the time. Aimed squarely at the Alternative & 60s Club Dancefloors it features tracks from **The Sonics, The Kinks, The Action, The Chocolate Watch Band, The Haunted, The Standells, Paul Revere & The Raiders, The Shadows of Knight, The Yardbirds, The Quick, The Spencer Davis Group, Count Five, The Seeds** and more. *'Wig Out! Freak Out!'* is packed full of Freakbeat and Mod classics as well as rare sought after nuggets.

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VARIOUS ARTISTS
Light In The Attic And Friends
★★★★

LIGHT IN THE ATTIC CD/2-LP

One of the go-to labels for voracious cratediggers, Light In The Attic has always made a point of having musics of yesterday and today in constant dialogue. It couldn't be more clear when playing this new compilation, a joyful, multi-faceted celebration conceived on the back of LITA's singles series (which saw contemporary artists reinterpreting favourites from the label's catalogue). The perfectly titled *Light In The Attic And Friends* is a smorgasbord of sonic delights.

Some tracks pair legends who got recognition late in their life: Vashti Bunyan sings 'How Could You Let Me Go', a song by the perennially overlooked Lynn Castle, together with Devendra Banhart, who played such an important role in Bunyan's recognition as a godmother of indie-folk; similarly, Bridget St John pays homage to her old friend Michael Chapman by teaming up with Steve Gunn on 'Rabbit Hills'; hearing Charles Bradley make Sixto Rodriguez's 'I'll Slip Away' his own makes for a particularly moving moment. There are also unexpected parallels: between funk and punk (in the form of Iggy Pop turning a Betty Davis belter into an attack of Black Sabbath proportions), or John Lydon and Lawrence (Mozart Estate's technicolour take on PiL's 'Low Life'). There are re-works that turn the original inside out (Leslie Winer and Maxwell Sterling's rendition of Tim Buckley's 'Once I Was'), inspired tributes by young talents (like Silas Short re-imagining Leo Nocentelli's 'You've Become A Habit') and seasoned masters reaching beyond geographic and stylistic boundaries to acknowledge the greats of today (Roedelius playing Tinariwen). There are pairings that make perfect sense: Mac DeMarco and Haruomi Hosono, for instance, or Mark Lanegan and Karen Dalton (deservedly, Dalton also gets a second tribute from Angel Olsen).

The ultimate gem is 'We Don't Run', a Willie Nelson deep cut re-imagined as a father-daughter duet by Ethan and Maya Hawke. It's the *LITA And Friends* concept at its purest: heartfelt, cozy, imperfect even: the Hawkes are briefly interrupted by mutual laughter. Some may find the compilation a little patchy, but that's the beauty of it: a large gathering of friends requires a touch of loving chaos too.

Camilla Aisa

Vashti Bunyan: our friend in the attic

IAN M BAILEY
We Live In Strange Times
★★★★

KOOL KAT MUSIC CD

Opener 'The Last Chime' may be the closest recreation of the classic Byrds sound you're likely to hear this decade, but Lancastrian musician Bailey is no mere McGuinn copyist.

Sure, he plays a mean six and 12-string Rickenbacker, and this album is co-written with Cosmic Rough Riders' Daniel Wylie, but Bailey mixes up his influences and adds his own special sauce to the indie-psych-jangle of 'It's Summer Rain', the dramatic synths and '80s funk of 'The Clock Is Ticking' and spy-film instrumental 'She Waltzes With The Devil'.

If there's a loose theme of environmental concern on the first few songs, the second half dives deeper into personal heartbreak and Americana, with Alan Gregson's orchestrations, plus lap steel on 'Dance Around The Room' adding colour to Bailey's palette. The spare finger-picked guitar and cello of the closing 'The Moon Floats On A Cloud' ends the album on a plaintive high note.

Ben Graham

BITW
Rehearse
★★

KLEP DIM TREP

That the experience of music is subjective in the extreme will not come as news to any of you. Every reader will have experienced the anti-climax that comes from seeking out a record someone dear to you has raved about only to find it leaves you cold. So it is that an act Cate Le Bon has hyped as "sci-fi mountain music" hits this listener more as modern downer indie with an '80s white funk overlay.

Whilst some of the charmingly DIY cottage industry vibe of so much modern Welsh pop is still present here, and there's plenty of diversity in terms of the instrumentation, there's also a monochrome sameness to many of the tracks. The choruses do nag away at you, and there's a melancholic undertow that may well appeal, but personally I could have done with more of the promised explorations of the outer reaches of '60s/70s pop.

Hugh Dellar

COSMIC GARDEN PROJECT
The Green Reverb
★★★

KOMMUN2 / GREEN STREET CD/LP

Describing themselves as a music and art collective, Cosmic Garden Project first came together in 2019 in Gothenburg, Sweden. Fluid by nature, the group mainly revolves around seasoned players Per Svensson, Dan Söderqvist (a founding member of Swedish psychedelic legends Älgarnas Trädgård) and Pontus Torstensson.

Their debut is an imposing double album that sets to investigate our relationship with nature, whether through shamanic-like invocations or heavy reflections on humans' destructive ways. "A sound journey to imaginary places in communication with spirits of nature", the album cover reads. The pieces that follow, noticeably informed by free-flowing improvisation, mix electric thunder, electronic elements and field recordings, and sit evenly between space rock, dark psychedelia and dusky new age. In places, like on the gloomy 'Fields Of Fungus', Cosmic Garden Project sound like Protomartyr going the kosmische route. Still, *The Green Reverb* is too lengthy and weighty to keep listeners engaged from start to finish.

Camilla Aisa

CUSTARD FLUX
Phosphorus
★★★

SELF-RELEASED CD/2-LP

Detroit musician Gregory Curvey will be familiar to regular readers as the leader of The Luck Of Eden Hall, a mainstay band on the Fruits de Mer label. His Custard Flux side-project may not be so familiar, but this is their fourth full-length outing, put together during the early COVID lockdowns when Curvey had recently purchased a vintage Harley Davidson Sportster. With time spent either out riding or recording, it's little wonder that the celebratory sense of freedom provided by car-free open roads would seep into these tracks.

Phosphorus is not so much "prog-rock", more "prog that rocks". Songs stretch out with extended instrumental passages, and are decorated with saxophones, flutes, and wig-out Zappa-esque guitar solos. Lyrics are mostly confessional and autobiographical – a cool counterpoint to the unhindered full-throttle music. Highlights include the jazz-rock thrust of instrumental 'Strawberry Squid' and the elegant piano on 'By Order Of The Grand Vizier'.

Duncan Fletcher

DEF.FO
Eternity
★★★★

SELF-RELEASED LP

This debut album by father-son duo Steve and Tom Powell is less urban than the band name and artwork might suggest. In fact, its laidback psych-pop gets downright pastoral in places, which is hardly surprising when you twig that both Powells are sometime contributors to Michael Head's Red Elastic Band. Head crops up as a guest vocalist on the album's folkiest tracks, 'Dreamers' and 'The Healing Fields' and both are undoubted highlights, the latter also featuring gorgeous flute from Simon James.

We're not suggesting that the remaining 10 songs are sub-standard though. There's a recurring feel of '90s indie and trip-hop, with 'Godly' featuring a full-on rap and call-and-response chorus over juddering beats. Elsewhere, the title track has a catchy earworm of a vocal melody, and Chris Geddes of Belle & Sebastian adds Mellotron to the lilting 'Autumn Leaves'. With over a dozen players involved, *Eternity* is a triumphant collaboration.

Ben Graham

EAMON RA
Dunce Witch Snowman
★★★

SELF-RELEASED LP

"On the periphery is where I can be found," sings Seattle DIY pop maven Eamon Ra four tracks into his new album *Dunce Witch Snowman*. Ra's excellent debut *Meat Bones Chemicals Electricity* slid straight into said periphery in 2020, landing as the pandemic hit – documented here on 'Quarantine Blues'.

Album two draws again on Ra's British Invasion influences, pointedly 1966-68 vintage Kinks. On the title track, he's so expertly assimilated Ray's rasp and Dave's slashing 12-string you wonder if the Davies brothers had a brief out of body experience. Strong as these songs are, the highlights see him slightly shake Ray and Dave off. The perky 'Up And At 'Em' evokes the horns and stomps end of Britpop, 'Happiest Day Gone Astray' is a small, perfect interlude of gauzy woodwind and backwards bits, while 'Have You Seen Emma?' is lovely, florid and yearning. It sounds nice on the periphery.

Martin Ruddock

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

THE FISHHEADS
Lobster Basque Replica
★★★★

FRUITS DE MER LP

Echoes of Captain Beefheart's *Trout Mask Replica* might abound in The Fishheads' choice of *Lobster Basque Replica* as the title of what turns out to be the 100th release from the much-loved Fruits de Mer label. However, in reality this turns out to be something of a red herring.

Featuring members of Astralasia and special guests The Fishheads are all about immersing themselves in their polite yet thoroughly effective perambulations through classic '60s British psych in the shape of Floyd's 'See Emily Play', 'Set The Controls For The Heart Of The Sun', 'Remember A Day' and Mighty Baby's 'Egyptian Tomb'. Among other things, *Lobster Basque Replica* is an album in two very distinct parts, the second coming in the form of a spacey 20-minutes-plus improvised journey through Leonard Bernstein's 'Something's Coming' from *West Side Story* that feels like The Grateful Dead in full-on 'Dark Star' mode.

Grahame Bent

NICK FRATER
Nick Frater Presents The Rebutles 1967-1970
★★★★★

GREAT SHEIKS CD

It takes a twisted genius to form a tribute band of, er, a tribute band, but that's essentially The Rebutles. Singer, songwriter, musician and producer Nick Frater released his first homage to Ron, Dirk, Stig and Barry in 2021, a hilariously well-observed re-imagining of Beatles songs Neil Innes and his crew hadn't yet reached. But that mish-mash of tracks from the Fabs' mid-period through to their solo years gets a much clearer focus in The Rebutles' "blue" album, which covers the twilight years of both the real and imaginary bands.

The song titles tell you pretty much everything you need to know: 'Oh-Blo-Mi, Blo-Mi-Off', 'Loose Tea In Disguise', 'Mother Knows Best' and 'Nothing' (think the opposite!) all delivered with musical panache, humour and obvious affection for the originals. The tunes are irresistible and although pastiche will always be a guilty pleasure, we have to be grateful someone's still willing to re-tool our favourite melodies – especially now The Rutles no longer exist.

Chris Twomey

HARP
Albion
★★★★

BELLA UNION CD/LP

Alongside the likes of Fleet Foxes, Midlake made a significant contribution to a particular strand of pastoral American indie-rock some time back. Since then, the band's leading light Tim Smith has been only an occasional presence, honing this new project in collaboration with his wife Kathi Zung in the years away from the spotlight.

In part, Harp pick up where Midlake left off, with the inspiration of British folk themes and sensibilities still very much in evidence. Yet, there is an intriguing tilt towards prime 4AD and *Faith*-era Cure from the opening song 'I Am The Seed', its flanged guitars, and uncluttered drums, giving Smith's voice new space to roam. The combination works incredibly well; where Midlake perhaps leant towards precision, a washed-out psychedelia permeates the new project, framing Smith's distinctively melancholic songwriting, notably on the gorgeous 'Country Cathedral Drive' and standout track 'Daughters Of Albion'.

Ben Phillipson

ANNA HILLBURG
Tired Girls
★★★★

SPEAKEASY STUDIOS SF LP

Bay area multi-instrumentalist Hillburg's trumpet playing and horn arranging skills imbue her third album with a relaxed Belle & Sebastian vibe while her feminist perspective ("Ladies, trust your gut and invest in your own self-worth") is couched inside extremely catchy tunes.

A rolling piano, galloping drums, timely trumpet bursts, and a head-nodding melody cascades through 'Holdin' On', while a strident girl power message with a Buffy Sainte-Marie "stand tall, stand proud" streak propels the title track. 'Girl Girl Girl' saunters along with a kick-up-your-heels western groove and there's a quirky Elephant 6 (Neutral Milk Hotel, Olivia Tremor Control) mis-direction in the fractured medley 'It Certainly Feels / Little Sister', although it might've worked better as separate tracks. But the coy, wink-wink 'What To Do With The Lights Out' adds a light-hearted tickle (and David Cuetter's smooth pedal steel) to up the fun quotient.

Jeff Penczak

THE HURRICANES
Here Comes The Storm
★★★★

SPINOUT NUGGETS CD/LP

The Northampton quartet describe their sound as "loud garage mod", and that sounds bang-on for tracks like 'Pity May Cooper', a Small Faces/Jam mash-up, and heavy-metal powerpop opener 'We Ride On'. 'Going Home', however, transports us to '70s

Continues over

Blowing away the competition. The Hurricanes

Brisbane and the early days of The Saints, while 'Smile' leaps to '80s Liverpool and settles somewhere between the Bunnymen and Wah! (Mighty or otherwise).

This is an album crammed with proper tunes so it's all good, but if we had to pick favourites then the Stonsey swagger of 'I Got Time For You' and 'Things Could Be Better Than This', a sure-fire hit if guitar pop was still the music of the masses, had us immediately pressing repeat on first play.

In fact, this writer liked *Here Comes the Storm* so much he bought the company (a lie; he merely bought the CD, but that's not as grand a sign off).

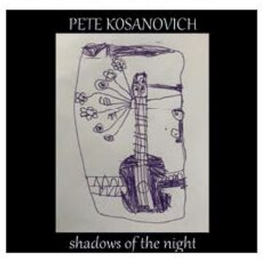
Peter Gallagher

PETE KOSANOVICH

Shadows Of The Night

★★★★

PETE K MUSIC CD



Preceded by a couple of singles, the excellent 'They Are For Real' and 'Love Is Rare', this latest album excursion by London-based Kosanovich sees the singer, guitarist and harmonica player continuing down the folk and blues-style troubadour path.

This time around – although there's still evidence of the Donovan, Bert Jansch and Richard Thompson influences that have been part of Kosanovich's palette of colours since his eponymous recording debut in 2015 – one can also detect one or two strands which are, perhaps, more akin to a modern-day early Butterfield Blues Band with some effective use of electric guitar. As ever, there's a diverse mix of emotions and styles at play throughout, with the gentle flow and the more forthright approach sitting side by side. Kosanovich works well as protest singer/soothsayer and across *Shadows Of The Night* those roles are in full swing. It surely can't be long before bigger audiences get hip to Kosanovich's trip.

Lenny Helsing

KOTIOMKIN

Le Casalingue: The Satanic Rites Of Cobram

★★★★

SUBSOUND CD/LP

Italian horror film soundtracks are having quite the resurgence of late. Back when the likes of Dario Argento and Lucio Fulci were committing their palates of gore to film, they were invariably supplemented by the searing musical scores of Goblin or Fabio Frizzi – with the devastating effect of elevating the onscreen images to another level. The growing love for this music 40, 50 years later has inspired a whole new genre of artists, keen to recreate this atmosphere themselves.

One such example is Kotiomkin, the Italian duo of bassist/'synthist' Enzo P/Zeder and drummer Gianni Narcisi whose brand of heavy-prog and doom-rock neatly emulates the foreboding tone so integral to old school Italian horror. *Le Casalingue* sees the duo inspired by fictional vampire, Calboni and is intense in every sense of the word. It achieves its horror soundtrack aspirations while standing as a heavy-rock album in its own right. Not for the faint-hearted.

Sarah Gregory

LOVE OF THE BRAVE

Love Of The Brave

★★★★

ATA LP

Originally released back in 2010 on CD-only, Love Of The Brave's self-titled and so far only album gets a much-deserved vinyl pressing. Taking inspiration from British folk-rock's high watermarks (think Pentangle, Fairport Convention, Heron and their ilk), Neil Innes (no relation) and Fuzzy Jones spent nine months recording in a fledgling analogue studio in a garage on the outskirts of Leeds. The resulting record sounds like it could have been made anytime from 1968 to the present day.

Deftly picked acoustic guitar and Jones's crystal-clear vocals are at the heart of the tracks, which are fleshed out with brass, flute, harmonium, cello, Wurlitzer, bowed double bass and more. Eventually Innes, together with friend Pete Williams, would start ATA Records out of the same Leeds garage, specialising in soul and library music. It all began with this foray into stately folk, however. Highlights include 'Dusted Off', with its freak-out saxophone solo, and the laidback, bucolic 'Heron'.

Duncan Fletcher

THE MARK THREE

Paisley Paradise

★★★★

FAB CD

Veteran musicians Mark Le Gallez, Paul Hooper-Kelley and Emma Page have performed in numerous bands over the past 40 years, but this is their first collaboration. Each of them has an opportunity to shine on an engaging collection of garage-rock that adds elements of mod, powerpop and psychedelia.

Opener 'One Last Time' sets the tone. Propelled by a pounding beat, thrashing guitars and stabs of Hammond organ, this tale of hope and heartbreak is over in little more than two minutes. For all the playfulness of 'What I Want' and the insistent 'Kiss Me', there are hints in the lyrics of lessons hard learned from life experience. That's also true of lovelorn highlights 'Keep Me Waiting' and 'Me And My Guitar', the latter including the winning couplet, "You mean even more to me than my guitar / And don't you know that's going far". With its warm, live in the studio sound, this is a resonant assemblage of retro rock.

Clive Webb

ORGONE

Chimera

★★★

3PALM CD/LP

Attentive *Shindig!* readers will recognise the sound of Orgone. A Los Angeles staple since the '90s, the group (led by Sergio Rios and Dan Hastie) is also busy backing our favourite discodelic trio Say She She, both on stage and in the studio.

Their new album finds them showing their chops as knowledgeable purveyors of a dense mix of psychedelic soul, cinematic grooves, Afrobeat moods and funky instrumentals. Like the title suggests, *Chimera* delights in multiplicity, although with uneven results. Interestingly, Congolese musician Merman 'Mofaya' Mosengo joins Orgone on the highly danceable 'Zum Zum' and 'Tula Muisi (Dance Like Them)', singing in his native Lingala. It's when the band gets loose and lost in a deep funk that has its roots firmly planted in vintage soundtracks (as they do on highlights 'Basilisk' and 'Parasols', as well as the singalong-worthy 'Peace For You') that *Chimera* is at its most captivating.

Camilla Aisa

PLEASUREWOOD

They Live

★★★★

FARFALLA LP

So enduring are the influences on this disc – overdriven organ in a Hawkshaw style; the hot 'n' heavy drums of a Hindi thriller

Continues over

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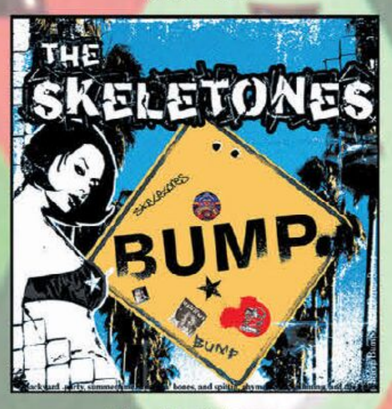
Atlantis Aquarius
Nibirian Sun
NER - 007



The Skeletones
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NER - 009

Imaad Wasif
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Leo's Rising
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Ritual
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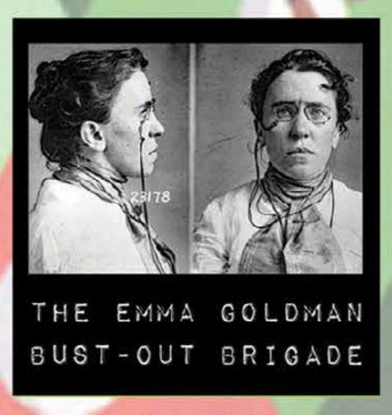

The Emma Goldman
Bust-Out Brigade
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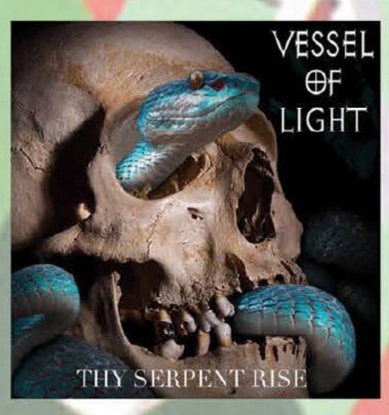

Vessel Of Light
Thy Serpent Rise
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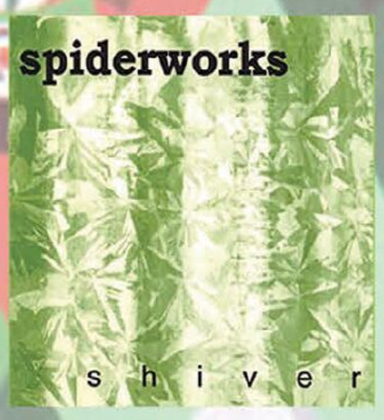
Vessel Of Light
Last Ride
NER - 034



Spiderworks
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Livingmore
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NER - 038

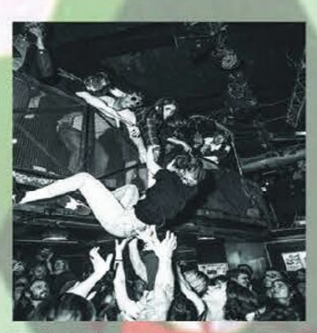
Cassius King
Field Trip
NER - 046

Dream Phases
New Distractions
NER - 048

The Potions
Fun Babies
NER - 011

Young Creatures
Something I Don't Know
NER - 012

Livingmore
It's All Happening
NER - 013



Mike Watt & The Secondmen / Zig-Zags
L.A. to Pedro
NER - 021

The Black Gang / East Meets West
My Head Is My Only House
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Christian Bland & The Revelators
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Returning Legends

AGITATION FREE
Momentum
★★★★

MIG CD/2-LP

It's fair to say that in the continuing rush to praise the great kosmische bands, a few tend to get overlooked – Agitation Free is one. Combining the quintessential krautrock elements of psychedelia, *avant-garde* moves and cosmic-rock, the band released just two studio albums during their heyday with nothing new forthcoming until 1999. Another long hiatus then followed, but at last Agitation Free return with *Momentum*, their first new music in 25 years.

With all four original members in attendance, the band has fashioned an acid-rock opus that sits firmly in the old school krautrock camp. Each song a mini-prog epic, there are strong echoes of Ozric Tentacles on tracks like 'Nouveau Son' and 'Lilac'. But underneath the pomp there are deep layers of complexity – the electronica of 'Shibuya', the dystopian ambiance of 'Nightwatch', and the Anatolian and gamelan influences that run throughout 'Levant' and 'InDaJungl'. A marvellous cosmic return.

Sarah Gregory

EDGAR BROUGHTON
Break The Dark
★★★

ESOTERIC CD

Edgar Broughton returns after a mammoth 41-year hiatus with his first new material since The Edgar Broughton Band's final studio album, 1982's *Superchip*.

Recorded and assembled at Broughton's home throughout the pandemic anyone expecting a discernible thread of continuity with the halcyon years of The Edgar Broughton Band is in for something of a shock. Reunited with EBB bass player Arthur Grant and featuring Swedish cellist Calle Arngrip, far from EBB's anarchic, analogue, underground rock of times gone by, the album feels like a radical departure with its spectral and ethereal quality, layered textures and the sombre and introspective mood of the songs.

At times feeling like he's strayed into Leonard Cohen and Nick Cave territory on 'Belle Of Trevelyn', 'Eulia','Hymn' and the concluding title track, Broughton also joins the lengthy list of artists to lend their name to a memorable cover of Bonnie Dobson's 'Morning Dew'.

Grahame Bent

soundtrack; sparkling library-esque keys – that had it been released on, say, Talkin' Loud 30 years ago, it might now be considered something of a diggers' item itself.

Paul Elliot and Anthony Donje AKA Pleasurewood (named, quite incongruously, after a funfair in Lowestoft) make the most of these influences and infuse this debut LP with real life, from the funked-up vibes of opener 'Firework' with its TV-detective-drama shifts, to the highly sampleable beats of 'Soul Bay', the sinuously danceable 'Ghost Ship' and the driving pulse of lead single 'They Live'. It's all tightly written, tastefully-produced stuff – even the organ and guitar work-out of 'Gramercy Park' doesn't overstay it's welcome, wisely leaving one wanting more. And if Pleasurewood don't quite synthesise anything genuinely new from all this, who really cares?

Christopher Budd

PSYCHEDELIC PORN CRUMPETS
Fronzoli
★★★★

WHAT REALITY CD/LP

On their sixth full-player Aussie psychedelic mavericks Psychedelic Porn Crumpets are clearly having a jolly good time. Luckily for us, *Fronzoli* is one of those records that let listeners have just as much fun.

With song titles that signal a joyful anarchic flair, the album offers both the band's signature skilful – but never show-offy – riffage ('Hot! Heat! Wow! Hot!') and hooky highlights that sound, by their standards, poppy ('Dilemma Us From Evil', 'Cpt Gravity Mouse Welcome'). Nestled between the songs is a thick sonic collage that patches together everything from old movies dialogue to the classic dial-up modem sound (which, if you think of it with a tissue at hand, is just as vintage); it's a cheery cacophony that gets thrown at the listener, with no time left to think... or breathe. Yet, instead of confusing or overwhelming, the effect is surprisingly rapturous and thoroughly engaging.

Camilla Aisa

BILL RYDER-JONES
Iechyd Da
★★★★

DOMINO CD/LP

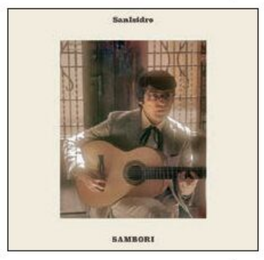
Few artists write with such searing honesty as Ryder-Jones. The West Kirby songwriter has never been shy of baring his soul. His seventh solo outing finds him wrestling inner demons, while exploring the need to love and be loved.

With vocals at times half-whispered you feel as if you're somehow allowed to share precious secrets. The band is in expressively sympathetic form too, as heard on 'This Can't Go On' – a sweeping cinematic epic complete with children backing singers. 'How Beautiful I Am' starts as a simple waltz time song picked out on piano, before time signature changes and expressive strings add stately grandeur. Michael Head makes a guest appearance, reading from James Joyce's *Ulysses* (Ryder-Jones produced Head's 2022 album *Dear Scott*). With the Welsh language title inspired by family roots and a love of Welsh culture, *Iechyd Da* is an intimate diaristic record that contains sadness and hope in equal measure.

Duncan Fletcher

SANISIDRO
Sambori
★★★★

LA CASTANYA CD/LP



Sanlsidro is the solo project of Valencian singer-songwriter Isidro Rubio. Despite Rubio having a background in various punk and garage bands, Sanlsidro is immersed in flamenco, Spanish folkloric sounds and the musical heritage of Spain's Mediterranean coast.

Taking its title from the Valencian word for hopscotch, *Sambori* is at once sombre and dramatic in terms of the musical *tableaux* which are brought to life across its 10 tracks. Openers don›t come much more foreboding than 'Prel-ludi / La Questio Atavica', on which the combination of vocal laments, reverb-laden guitar and horns recall the drama, solemnity and spectacle of a *Semana Santa* procession. Augmented by understated backing tracks Rubio's vocals, acoustic and electric guitar give voice to the ghosts of flamenco and Iberian folk-blues on 'Puente De Plata', 'Ai, Valent!', 'Los Pies De Cristo' and 'Pecado De Omision'. Moodily resonant, *Sambori* imaginatively marries the past with the present in a seductively unhurried way.

Grahame Bent

TY SEGALL
Three Bells
★★★

DRAG CITY LP

When you think of Ty Segall, what do you see? Perhaps a technicolour blur, hidden behind hair and distortion. His latest album *Three Bells* does little to evolve this perception.

Both the album cover—a fuzzy portrait—along with the 15 tracks, keep Segall at a distance from the listener. Releasing at least one album a year since 2009, Segall mirrors similarly prolific psych-os (King Gizzard, GBV and Mac Demarco come to mind) who seem to draw praise (or criticism) simply for the volume of their work. Luckily, Segall has smart instincts as a songwriter; his best songs surprise us. Unluckily, he's abstracted the art of editing and thrown clarity to the wind. On many of the tracks on *Three Bells*, Segall seems fettered by fuzz. Still,

there's plenty to grab hold of. 'Move', 'Void' and 'My Room', three of his best songs in recent memory, optimise melody and decide on a mood.

Tess Carges

SMOKEY ANGLE SHADES
Let Go Of The Past
★★★★

EUROPA SUN DIGITAL

There's something meta about a band urging us to let go of the past while pulling magpie-like at overlooked scraps of musical history and twisting them together into vaguely familiar but unsettling new shapes.

If it initially sounds like they're cruising down the middle of the road, listen again to the way Northern Irish singer-guitarists Pat Dam Smyth and Brian 'Nipsy' Russell, plus bassist Ned Crowther (The Fernweh) push Beach Boys-10cc-Philly soul harmonies slightly out of tune on smart '70s ballads like 'Let's Start All Over Again' and 'A Star Called Youth'. 'And You Tied A Ribbon On It' finds them heading for the disco with vocoders in tow, while 'Green Eyes' pushes country-rock into plastic-fantastic new-wave territory. Having a closing track called 'Rewind' is somewhat arch too, especially when this Bowie ballad drops into a psychedelic black hole in the middle. Smokey Angle Shades? You gotta watch 'em.

Ben Graham

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

THE SUNCHARMS
Things Lost
★★★★

SUNDAY CD/LP

Sheffield quintet The Suncharms first committed music to wax with an eponymous 12-inch EP way back in 1990. These sensitive indie-kids may now be in their thoughtful middle-age but that's not deterred them getting a second wind. Debut album *Distant Lights* came out after a 30-year hiatus in 2021, and they've now followed it up with this newie.

It's a delightfully ragged and tuneful affair, with vocalist Marcus Palmer in reflective mood, setting scenes with painterly detail – the left behind copy of a horror film at the end of a relationship ('Satanic Rites'), an emotional stocktake of a trip to the coast ('Whitby'), or the lament for Sheffield Corporation trams, and perhaps lost youth and simpler times ('Last Tram'). With slowly strummed distorted guitars, occasional harmonica, Mellotron keys, and memorably melodic vocals lines there are echoes of several pre-Britpop indie bands, albeit with modern-day concerns and wisdom.

Duncan Fletcher

THE SURFIN' BIRDS
Blue Room
★★★

SELF-RELEASED CD/LP

Racing out of the traps with the rapid-fire, fuzz-edged instrumental 'Caterpillar Walk' here is the new release from Weymouth's own Surfin' Birds.

There's less surf-influenced sonic goodness on the album than you'd expect, and a lot more twisted Memphis rockabilly-blues. Sounding at times like *Teenage Head*-era Flamin' Groovies and at others like The Blasters mixed with a dash of Johnny Thunders, the Lungs tackle some dark subject matter, specifically on 'Junkie', which sounds as if it was recorded in some obsidian walled basement crash pad.

From the John Lee Hooker chops of the aptly named 'Boogie!' to the incendiary tempo-tweaking jam of 'Freddie's Shuffle', there's an authentic deep south, Sam Phillips feel to the superior blues-boogie and garage-rock. So it's fortunate, and possibly apt, that these recordings of The Devil's music were rescued from the fire that enveloped the band's studio space.

Henry Hutton

TAPIR!
The Pilgrim, Their God, And The King Of My Decrepit Mountain
★★★★

HEAVENLY CD/LP

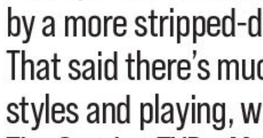
If you like your folk music to come with a weird twist Tapir! could well be your new favourite band. The sextet formed in the creative crucible centred on east London's George Tavern venue and dispense with well-worn forms and tropes in favour of letting their freak flag fly.

This debut album rounds ups their three EPs to date. A story unfolds in three acts, in which the central hero, (an ambiguous red creature known as "the Pilgrim"), take an eventful walk up a mountain. Each act begins with a spoken-word passage by Little Wings' Kyle Field. Along the way there's death, a storm, a shipwreck, and a melodic tip of the hat to Erik Satie. An album that's defiantly "alt", otherworldly, offbeat and off-kilter, but on course to win you over. At times Tapir! sound like an acoustic Arcade Fire, transporting listeners with their quiet, strange euphoria.

Duncan Fletcher

THOSE UNFORTUNATES
Welcome To Woodberry Down
★★★

GARE DU NORD CD/LP



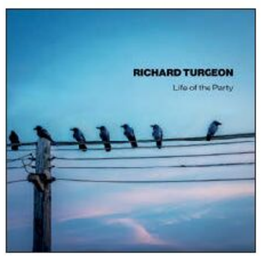
When this idiosyncratic combo opened for Jowe Head in Edinburgh a few years ago many attendees were blown away by their style and performance. They have songs peppered with wit and grit, and possess close sound ties to those other London luminaries of the indie pop-art world, Television Personalities who, of course, included the redoubtable Mr Head.

This is their second album, a conceptual affair that includes the characters Mr Morrison, Mad Max Rapaport and the various goings on around Woodberry Down; an area of Hackney indwelt by lead vocalist and lyricist Ben Brill's family. There are good ideas happening across the board, including the lovely 'Silk Screen Printer' and 'New River', but studio reverb swamps much of it – the intrusion hindering rather than enhancing. Perhaps the album would be better served by a more stripped-down production overall. That said there's much to enjoy in the song styles and playing, which echo the likes of The Smiths, TVPs, Mercury Rev and Madness.

Lenny Helsing

RICHARD TURGEON
Life Of The Party
★★★★

BANDCAMP DL



San Francisco-based singer-songwriter/multi-instrumentalist Richard Turgeon is an old friend of these pages. He inhabits a powerpop universe that's heavier than most: much closer to Weezer, Green Day and Bob Mould than, say, Teenage Fanclub, and he's hardly put a foot wrong yet.

This sixth album, he declares, will be his last for a while because he needs to concentrate on other projects, including an on-going Hollywood film script about the deeply dysfunctional relationship between Dennis Wilson and Charles Manson in the late '60s. Creating music has surely provided a welcomed distraction from the bullshit of navigations and negotiations in recent months. There's a lot to enjoy here, from the bombastic opener and single 'All Alone', a stinging goodbye to an ex-lover ("I'm better when I'm alone") to the emotional, Beatle-esque closer, which is another single and a love letter to Turgeon's father, who's suffering from Parkinson's Disease. All the stuff in between is cranked up high, yet consistently brilliant and unwaveringly melodic.

Chris Twomey

Kind of blue.
The Surfin' Birds

THE BEATHOVENS
Dream With Me Baby / Havana
★★★★
KUCKOO

German group who issued the *Happy To Be Happy* LP and the delightfully oddball pop-psych single 'Blow-Up Machine', both in 1967. Here The Beathovens present their final two tracks, recorded in '69 after recruiting future production wizard Thomas Kukuck. The tapes are only now being released commercially; and only in a minuscule pressing of 100 copies.

'Dream With Me Baby' is a deliciously pleasant and melodic affair, by turns wistful and jaunty. Flipside 'Havana' – said to be one of the group's best received live numbers at the time – seeks the ears of those for whom thrills of the fuzzy, semi-psychedelic kind are a high requirement. It delivers too, largely down to great use of wah-wah and some madly cool phasing effects that will doubtless put heads in a swirl. Wrapped in a suitably garish psychedelic cover design, the package also contains an insert with comprehensive band story. Grab it quick.

Lenny Helsing

FOXTIDE
Paradise EP
★★★★
UNDER CURRENT

Southern Californian garage-rockers Foxtide are making a triumphant return after the success of their 2021 album *Visions*. *Paradise*, the four-piece's latest EP, is a catchy and condensed romp. The band does well what many current bands try to do: imbue modern psychedelic jam mystique into the buoyant boppiness of brash indie-pop. Unlike many, they achieve their goals.

Each of the six tracks is catchy, tight, and exciting. Listening to *Paradise*, you might think you've discovered a hidden gem from 2001–the songs offer perky drum fills, tight guitar playing, a great leading voice and, most importantly, a heavy dose of swagger. It's all surprisingly suave, coming from four lads who look like they've narrowly escaped study hall. Visually, they've got some growing up to do, but sonically, it's got the thrill of a young Julian Casablancas performing microphone acrobatics. 'Bumps And Bruises' and 'Running From Myself' are the earworms, but the whole thing is worth a listen.

Tess Carges

JARBAS MARIZ
Transas Do Futuro EP
★★★★
MR BONGO

Originally released on Brazilian experimental label Erla (also home to Guilherme Coutinho E O Grupo Stalo) in 1977, this EP feels like Jarbas Mariz draws on the earlier years of the decade for his influences and sources of inspiration.

Endearingly analogue-friendly and under the radar, there's an expressionistic quality in the way post-Tropicalia psych influences are blended here with elements of MPB and rock. Backed by musicians including the forementioned Guilherme Coutinho on electric piano, Mariz displays a chameleon-like ability to blend seemingly contradictory elements like electric piano and flute with bursts of blazing psych guitar as on the title track and 'Paragominas'. So many contrasting styles and ingredients are compressed into these four tracks, including echoes of Jorge Ben on the concluding 'Merece Ser', that it's impossible to fully quantify what's happening here. In its atypical way, the *Transas Do Futuro* EP feels like a minor revelation.

Grahame Bent

KEITH RELF
Shapes In My Mind / Blue Sands
★★★
DEMON

Appearing just a month after The Yardbirds' 'Happenings Ten Years Time Ago', this second attempt to launch singer Keith Relf as a solo artist is an even more curious choice than the maudlin reading of Bob Lind's 'Mr Zero' that took him into the lower echelons of the Top 50 earlier in the year.

Written and produced by manager Simon Napier-Bell, 'Shapes In My Mind' riffs on the existential/experimental pop of The Yardbirds' 1966 output without quite finding its feet. The stuttering stop-starts undermine the radio-friendly chorus, and while Relf is in fine voice throughout, the track fades prematurely, before leaving an impression. The song would be recycled by Françoise Hardy as 'Empty Sunday' for her '68 album *En anglais*. 'Blue Sands', meanwhile, is a formless blues instrumental, presumably bashed out by the hired musicians once Relf had gone to the pub. Comes in replica German picture sleeve.

Andy Morten

soul on 45

FATBACK BROTHER BILL CURTIS / JOHNNY KING & THE FATBACK BAND
Dance Girl / Keep On Brother Keep On

THE HUCK DANIELS CO.
Foolish Man (Part 1) / Foolish Man (Part 2)

BILLY GARNER
I Got Some (Part 1) / I Got Some (Part 2

CHESTER RANDLE'S SOUL SENDERS
Soul Brothers Testify (Part 1) / Soul Brothers Testify (Part 2)

LEON THOMAS
The Creator Has A Master Plan (Peace) (edit) / The Creator Has A Master Plan (Peace)
ALL ★★★★
ALL BGP

The first four releases in the latest batch of 45s from Ace are genuine funk classics. Perhaps the most ubiquitous is 'I Got Some' by Billy Garner. Originally released on Dave Hamilton's short-lived New Day label, both sides of this track have appeared many times on compilations and is rightly regarded as a deep-funk staple. The Detroit singer only released a smattering of singles and one album, but the quality of each suggests there should have been more. Another deep-funk classic is Chester Randle's Soul Senders' '**Soul Brother Testify**', a steamy raw and dirty, deep-funk two-parter. It has a similar feel to the psychedelic soul of Lee Moses' take on '**Reach Out, I'll Be There**'. Randle was a jobbing Louisiana guitarist and bandleader, whose group recorded for Eddie Shuler of Goldband's ANLA label.

Leon Thomas has a master plan

The James Brown influence on rare funk cannot be under-estimated. Brown's influence was far reaching. The Huck Daniels Co featuring Johnny Adams is the most JB-like. Guitarist Daniels was a long-time mainstay of the BB King band. His one single for Kent Records came in 1973 and is a propulsive JB-style funk dancer, with rubbery bass lines, funky guitar licks and blaring horns. Johnny Adams adds impassioned grunts and screams. Before signing to Spring Records and striking gold with disco hits like '**(Do The) Spanish Hustle**', The Fatback Band cut some rare funk tracks. Credited to Bill Curtis' Fatback Band, '**Dance Girl**', is a break-heavy, hypnotic laidback groove with funky drums supplied by Curtis. The flip is an early group release credited to Johnny King & The Fatback Band. An original '71 pressing will set you back over £1,000.

Finally, a change of scene and pace, with a seven-inch edit of serene spiritual-jazz classic '**The Creator Has A Master Plan (Peace)**' by Leon Thomas. It's lifted from his '69 Flying Dutchmen debut Spirits Known And Unknown and the B-side features an alternate version recorded by Louis Armstrong, which incidentally first appeared as the flip to his inspired version of John Lennon's '**Give Peace A Chance**'.

Paul Ritchie

SOFT HEARTED SCIENTISTS
Rode My Bike / What Grows Inside The Garden
★★★★
COUNTRY MILE / FRUITS DE MER

Welsh wizards Soft Hearted Scientists return with two prime cuts from latest album *Waltz Of The Weekend* on a spiffy, limited lathe-cut 45.

'Rode My Bike' is a cutely angular post-punk take on English tea-psych with main man Nathan Hall uttering more than singing lines like "I rode my bike / And it didn't go my way". With cool harmonies and knock-kneed guitar riffs, it's sprightly and wry stuff. There are echoes of Syd's Floyd, but the overall vibe is more like Dan Treacy having a lock-in with The Dukes Of Stratosphear – with a pleasingly pastoral middle section that almost sounds spliced-in from another song. Previous single 'What Grows Inside The Garden?' appears on the flip. A naggingly marvellous tune spring-

loaded with a big chorus and toytown psych flourishes and hooks – it's like an I-Spy game featuring limpid wah-wah, bursts of trapdoor echo and other layered bits of ear-goosing goodness.

Martin Ruddock

SVEN WUNDER

Ultramarine / Terracotta

★★★★

PIANO PIANO / MADLIB INVAZION

Released as part of the Madlib Invazion Library Series, this new 45 from Swedish composer Sven Wunder is a perfect distillation of his gift for capturing moods and setting scenes the way vintage library records and cult soundtracks intended to.

The two instrumentals are conspicuously different and equally atmospheric, evoking the magic of the great library music classics and their deep connection with listeners' imagination. With its string-driven jazz elegance, sumptuous A-side 'Ultramarine' brings to mind the musician's third full-length, *Natura Morta*, an album that saw him write delicately cinematic music for a chamber orchestra. The scenery it conjures uses aquatic elements as a means for inward-looking reflection. 'Terracotta', meanwhile, offers another movie altogether – think *Eastern Flowers*, Wunder's arresting breakthrough album, with a deliciously dangerous twist: a busy groove that seems born to accompany a B-movie chase scene, with funky Anatolian vibes to boot.

Camilla Aisa

THE ZEROS

Don't Push Me Around / Wimp
Beat Your Heart Out / Wild Weekend
They Say That (Everything's Alright) / Getting Nowhere Fast

ALL MUNSTER

ALL ★★★★★

Formed in Chula Vista, California in 1976, The Zeros were one of the pioneering punk bands on the West Coast and were soon signed by the always astute Greg Shaw. They released two devastating 45s on Bomp, both of which frequently change hands for three-figure sums these days, before moving on to Test Tube Records.

Munster has reissued the band's first three singles in facsimiles of their original sleeves, and any self-respecting lover of fast, furious fun needs these slabs of wax in their home. Personal favourite is the frenzied 91 seconds of 'Wild Weekend', which captures the blood rush and thrill of being 18 and out in the city as well as anything else recorded that year. For kids born 10 years too late for The Seeds, 'Don't Push Me Around' is as anthemic as 'Pushin' Too Hard' and if 'They Say That (Everything's Alright)' doesn't put a smile on your face, then you're already dead.

Hugh Dellar

tracks

CAMILLA AISA rounds up this month's digital downloads and stray oddities

Jane Weaver causes a spectacle

Hello 2024! And hello favourite artists releasing some of their finest songs yet. Such is the case with **JANE WEAVER** and '**Love In Constant Spectacle**', a track the plays somewhat like Stereolab making a forgotten late Bowie cut their own. Does that give an idea of how gorgeous it is?

Since we mentioned Stereolab, **LAETITIA SADIER** has been quite busy both on stage with The Groop and in the studio with various exciting projects. She's finally announced a new album under her own name, and if 'Une Autre Attente' is any indication, it'll be another prismatic trip into switched-on *avant*-pop coolness.

We're not done scouting La République for aural gems yet. Yann Lélias is used to do it all himself when making music as **PROJET DE VIE**, but he makes room for Frédérique Lélias Louvat's voice on the spellbinding 'Des Millions de Francs'. The pairing of haunted, decay-impending electronica and sweet post-*yé-yé* vocals is a fascinating one.

More Francophone goodness, *s'il vous plaît*. Partners in music and in life, Dutch artists Danique van Kesteren and Bart van Dalen make bilingual music as **DONNA BLUE**. '**Fantasy Girl**' is a lovely slice of noir-chic chamber-pop with Melody's Echo Chamber vibes and a Serge-worshipping heart.

Speaking of inspired duets, two *Shindig!* favourites, **AOIFE NESSA FRANCES** and **HOLLOW HAND**, have teamed up for one of Aquarium Drunkard's ever intriguing Lagniappe Sessions. For the occasion, they've reworked the Robert Wyatt/Elvis Costello classic '**Shipbuilding**' into a sublimely narcotic, delicately hallucinatory reverie.

They might be making music in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 2023, but musically and spiritually **THE MELLONS** belong somewhere else entirely. '**Make Me Feel**' travels back to an exuberant corner of the '60s that follows The Fab Four into technicolour escapades and returns with a hooky 'Got to Get You Into My Life'-enamoured melody.

From the dawn of The Summer Of Love to the mirror ball-lighted nights of the second half of the '70s, another gleefully nostalgic trip awaits. This time, it's Australian powerpopper **WESLEY FULLER** driving the time machine. Picture Jeff Lynne donning bespoke glam attire to offer the disco crowds an earworm, '**The House Of Love**', they won't forget.

Instrumental break. Actually, no, instrumental fun. What to say about the sound of **JAPANESE TELEVISION**'s new single? For starters, there's a riff that goes '**Tabadaboum**', as the title points out. As for the rest, it's a fuzz-heavy blast of space-surf energy partly inspired by the quartet's recent tour with Goat. May cause shambolic dancing.

You've heard of singalongs, now get ready to whistle along. Born in Australia and based in The City Of Angels, **MOLLY LEWIS** is music's current master whistler par excellence, turning an underrated skill into an elegant art form. '**Lounge Lizard**' is an infectious evocation of the golden age of exotica.

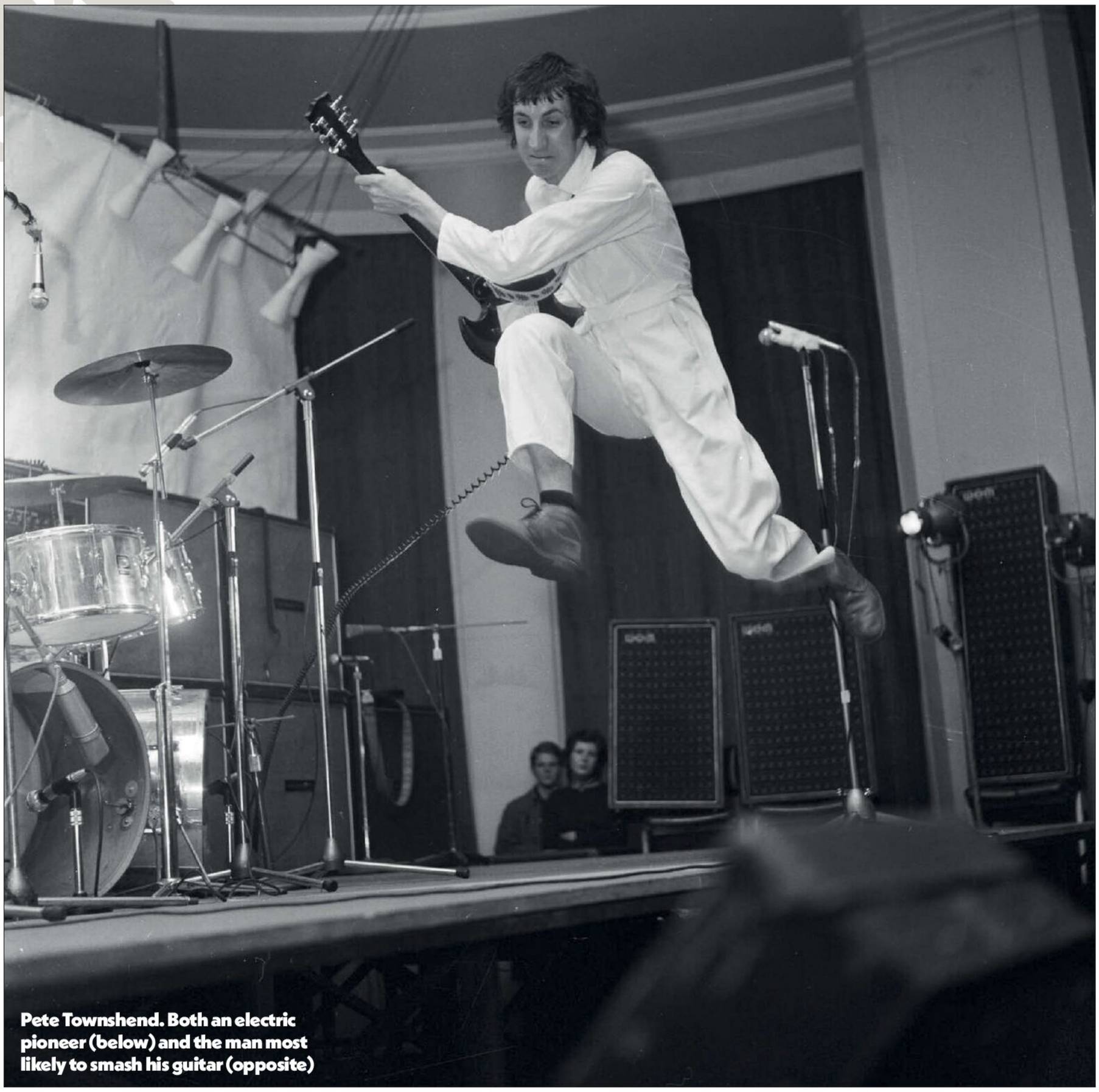
We've met **ANONA** (AKA singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Ella Russell) both through her solo work and as a member of Brighton's genre-defying group The New Eves. '**Same Old Lady**' is the atmospheric reimagination of Karen Dalton favourite 'Same Old Man', updated with cosmic-folk hues.

Keeping on with the hazy magic, we find South Carolina artist **NIECY BLUES**. A highlight of an already arresting debut, '**The Architect**' is incorporeal and enveloping – a contemporary spin on trip-hop with a delicately psychedelic flair that feels half dreamed and half remembered.

One of indie-rock's most gifted songwriters and guitarists, **MARY TIMONY** (Helium, Autoclave, Wild Flag, Ex Hex) has announced her first solo album in 15 years. Heartbreak is inescapable in this life, the perfectly charming 'Dominoes' reasons, but music never fails to have our back. Right on.

Charif Megarbane is one of today's most prolific musicians, his recent album for Habibi Funk being a highlight among hundreds (literally!) of releases. That doesn't stop him from coming up with delightful new tracks. Produced under the **COSMIC ANALOG ENSEMBLE** moniker, '**La Ligne Claire**' is a loving and elegant homage to the library music and Euro soundtracks of yore.

Winter Reading Special



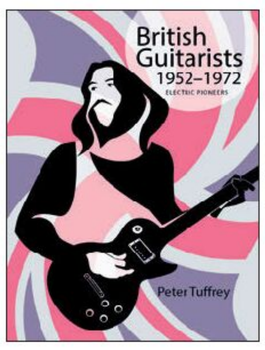
Pete Townshend. Both an electric pioneer (below) and the man most likely to smash his guitar (opposite)

BRITISH GUITARISTS 1952-1972: ELECTRIC PIONEERS

Peter Tuffrey

★★★

GREAT NORTHERN



America gave us the blues and rock 'n' roll, musical forms that relied heavily on the recently invented electric guitar. But it was British players who expanded the instrument's possibilities, and in doing so created the concept of the guitar hero. (A monopoly maintained until the arrival of a certain Mr. Hendrix).

Tuffrey's book contains 39 alphabetically presented profiles of these six-string heroes, focusing on how they fell in love with the instrument, their subsequent careers, and the guitars, amps and effects they used on the way. All the big names are here – Clapton, Page, Beck, Harrison, Richards, Townshend *et al* – along with some often overlooked but nonetheless great players – Tony Hicks, Martin Barre, Mick Moody, Dave 'Clem' Clempson. The earliest pioneers – Lonnie Donegan, Hank Marvin, Joe Brown – are also represented.

The book is fully illustrated and contains many of the authors own photographs, his access gained from a spell working in the guitar industry. While the focus may be too gear-centric for the casual reader, the more technically minded will enjoy the book's shadow history with its wealth of information on Selmer, Vox, Watkins, Burns, Marshall and the like, all companies that crafted the technology that fired and enabled the players' imaginations.

With a diverse cast of players, from Marc Bolan to John McLaughlin, the common threads that unites them all are a love of the instrument, single-minded dedication, and getting out and playing as many gigs as possible. Aspiring young players might want to take note.

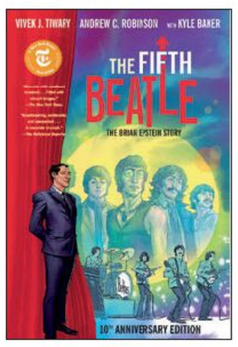
Duncan Fletcher

THE FIFTH BEATLE: THE BRIAN EPSTEIN STORY

Vivek J Tiwary, Andrew C Robinson & Kyle Baker

★★★★

M PRESS PB



It was 10 years ago today, apparently, that this award-winning graphic novel first appeared, so naturally here's an anniversary edition, stuffed with extras such as a sketchbook, essays, and downloadable *The Fifth Beatle* soundtrack, all under a spanking new cover.

The dichotomy of Brian Epstein's dizzying rise to showbiz success contrasted with his downward spiral into loneliness and addiction is at the core of this story, all written with a dramatic flair befitting someone whose daytime job is theatre producer. This is not a happy tale, but Tiwary is able to inject enough "loveable mop top" humour (Epstein: "You're late." Harrison: "No, I'm not... I'm George") and surrealistic interludes (negotiating with Ed Sullivan's ventriloquist's dummy to secure The Beatles' headlining spot on his titular show) to keep the reader engaged through the encroaching darkness. Whether they come away *knowing* Epstein better is another matter entirely.

Also, Epstein's curious love of bullfighting crops up a mite too often, leaving this reviewer wondering if these matadors are metaphors or if Brian just fancied fancy dans in capes and colourful costumes.

What truly sells the book is Robinson's gorgeous painted artwork. Those astonishing opening pages had me hooked, from that gallery-worthy splash page of the Mersey and Liverpool's Three Graces in the rain, to the clever use of body language in a gay pick-up gone brutally wrong – to the tune of Billy Fury's 'Wondrous Place', no less – to that close-up of Epstein, enrapt, as he witnesses The Beatles live for the first time.

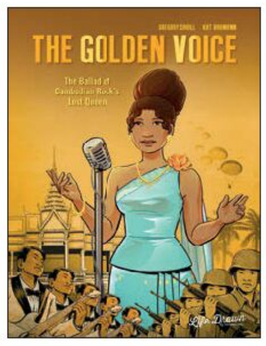
Peter Gallagher

THE GOLDEN VOICE: THE BALLAD OF CAMBODIAN ROCK'S LOST QUEEN

Gregory Cahill & Kat Baumann

★★★★

HUMANOIDS INC PB



Ros Serey Sothea rose from impoverished beginnings to become "The Golden Voice Of The Royal Capital", a glittering sobriquet bestowed upon her by Cambodia's ruler Prince Norodom Sihanouk. She became the country's most popular female singer in the late '60s and early '70s, an accolade she retains today. As well as a solo career encompassing a range of genres including traditional folk, big romantic ballads, garage and psych, she recorded a series of hugely successful duets with Sinn Sisamouth, Cambodia's favourite male singer both then and now. However, neither Sothea nor Sisamouth are alive to enjoy their continued success. They disappeared after Pol Pot came to power, along with 90% of Cambodia's musicians, victims of the Khmer Rouge's infamous Killing Fields.

Film-maker Gregory Cahill and artist Kat Baumann combine to tell Sothea's story in *The Golden Voice*, a 200-page graphic biography with a twist. Not surprisingly given Cahill's background, his perfect pacing and Baumann's storytelling prowess, the result is a motion picture in static form. As with Humanoids' recent Velvet Underground bio, the colouring is superlative; one can almost see the heat haze rippling in front of each panel.

The twist? The book comes with its own soundtrack. A QR code grants access to 47 songs by Ros Serey Sothea and other key names from the lost era of Cambodian rock. Play and pause symbols throughout the narrative informs the reader when and what to play. Perhaps one day, all books about musicians will be like this.

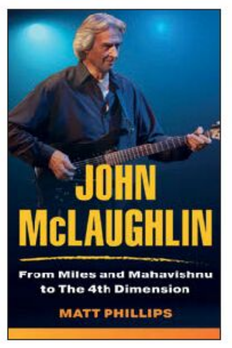
Peter Gallagher

JOHN McLAUGHLIN: FROM MILES TO MAHAVISHNU TO THE 4TH DIMENSION

Matt Phillips

★★★★

ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD



For most people, John McLaughlin continues to be defined by his ground-breaking and historic work with Miles Davis, The Tony Williams Lifetime and, most of all, The Mahavishnu Orchestra. Here, author and self-confessed superfan Matt Phillips widens his field of reference to include McLaughlin's entire career from its earliest days to the present.

While Phillips covers McLaughlin's tenures with Georgie Fame & The Blue Flames, The Graham Bond Quartet, his time on the London session scene and the momentous Miles, Lifetime and Mahavishnu

years, the book's principal focus is on his post-Mahavishnu work from 1976 onwards. Consequently, for the first time, McLaughlin's decades of comparatively overlooked solo and collaborative work with a diversity of ensembles ranging from Shakti to The 4th Dimension is given an equal footing to his glory days from years gone by. Besides offering the most comprehensive overview of McLaughlin's entire career to make it into print thus far, Phillips' detailed study is a reminder of how prolific and stylistically diverse McLaughlin's long and distinguished career has been and how his work has continued to be informed by his defining passions. Namely, the enduring influence of Miles, Coltrane and Hendrix, his long-held fascination with Indian classical music and his simple desire to keep on playing and continue his evolution as a musician.

All things considered, this is a well-researched attempt to offer some informed perspective on the trajectory of a spectacular career that has consistently defied any attempts at tidy categorisation.

Grahame Bent

MILES DAVIS AND THE SEARCH FOR THE SOUND

Dave Chisholm

★★★★★

ZZ COMICS

As an award-winning comic-book artist, jazz trumpeter and music educator Dave Chisholm is uniquely qualified to have authored this superbly realised graphic novel. Published with the blessing of the Miles Davis estate and coming with a foreword from Miles' son Erin, Chisholm's creation is a compelling visual experience from start to finish.

Echoing Miles' autobiography, the book charts his lifelong quest for "the sound", which remained continually in flux thanks to his willingness to absorb new influences and follow new directions throughout his long career and most dramatically on such towering landmarks as *Kind Of Blue, Sketches Of Spain, In A Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew*. Whether Charlie Parker, Gil Evans, John Coltrane, the line-ups of his classic first and second quintets, the heavyweight congregation of musicians assembled on his fusion masterworks and Jimi Hendrix, everyone who contributed to the evolution of Miles Davis trumpeter, bandleader, composer and chameleon visionary form part of the narrative here, as is the drama of his personal life, his struggles with addiction, recurring bouts of ill-health and his famously volatile personality. Telling the story of Miles' unparalleled career within the conventions and aesthetics of a comic-book works remarkably well thanks to Chisholm's way with dialogue, his manifest graphic skills, vibrant use of colour and his knowledge of and empathy with his subject.

This is Miles brought to life as never before.

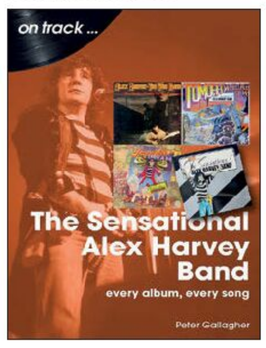
Grahame Bent

ON TRACK... THE SENSATIONAL ALEX HARVEY BAND

Peter Gallagher

★★★★

SONICBOND



Shindig! scribe Gallagher expands his feature on Harvey's pre-SAHB career (issue #141) with this equal-part biography and discographical analysis of the enigmatic frontman of numerous "backing bands". It's one of the series' strongest entries. At 37, Harvey had recorded five unsuccessful albums in various incarnations and was ready to abandon his decade-long lackluster career, whose highlights were winning the Scotland's Tommy Steele contest and playing in the pit band of the musical *Hair*. But then he met and rebranded an obscure Motown covers act named Tear Gas into his latest "Sensational" band.

Gallagher sets the stage with a short biographical sketch of Harvey's Glasgow youth before addressing those mostly superfluous covers albums, which often veered into country, folk, vaudeville, and ragtime. Most fans will probably skip to the SAHB material. Before that, Gallagher opines on Tear Gas's two albums (Deep Purple lite), Alex's *Roman Wall Blues* solo album (debuting future SAHB classics 'Midnight Moses' and 'Hammer Song'), his psychedelic folk outings with Giant Moth, and his selections from *Hair Rave-Up.* His contributions to Rock Workshop's eponymous debut are forgettable, save his original ("better") version of 'Hole In Her Stocking'.

Reviews are always subjective, so your thoughts on each SAHB album may diverge from Gallagher's (I personally agree that *Live* is their zenith) but he doesn't shy away from pointing out the warts and praising the classics, always backing up his opinions with well-considered evidence. Anecdotes and trivia abound, and fans and the curious alike will enjoy reading the history behind one of the '70s' best-loved, yet under-appreciated performers.

Jeff Penczak

THERE WAS A TIME – MARC BOLAN: A CHRONOLOGY

Cliff McLenehan

★★★★

WINTERGARDEN PUBLISHING

Earlier versions of McLenehan's exhaustive Bolan chronology were published in 1999 and 2002, but this latest edition is thoroughly updated and overhauled, reborn as a deluxe, full-colour coffee-table softback, packed with photos, concert ads, posters and ephemera as well as nearly 200,000 words covering every gig, recording session and promotional appearance by the bopping imp, plus selective social engagements and a selection of contemporary reviews, turning this from an "already-have" to a "must-have" for T Rex obsessives.

Absolutely a labour of love, the book follows a strict year-by-year format, opening each section with a summary overview and then covering key dates in order. Much more information has come to light since earlier editions, and where definite proof isn't available, McLenehan makes an educated guess, making it clear where this is the case. Avoiding pomposity and sticking rigidly to the facts, when the author does editorialise or offer an opinion it's with a welcome dose of dry wit. Furthermore, McLenehan doesn't put Bolan on a pedestal and is as candid about the singer's flaws and failures as his triumphs.

T Rex's time at the top was all too brief, and if it's frustrating to read reviews describing Bolan as an ageing has-been when he wasn't yet 30, it's doubly so that he died just as his career was getting back on track. What's clear is just how hard Marc worked to sustain his success: ruthless and egocentric he may have been, but he was also a compulsively creative, laser-focused artist. Get it (on).

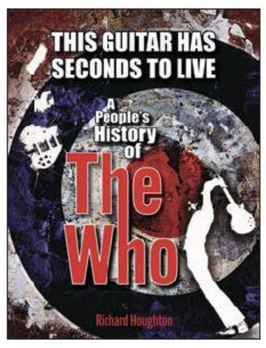
Ben Graham

THIS GUITAR HAS SECONDS TO LIVE: A PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE WHO

Richard Houghton

★★★★

SPENWOOD



It's a constant regret for this superfan that I'm about 15 years too young to have seen The Who play live during their prime. I had to wait until October 1989 and a Birmingham NEC show that saw 15 people on stage, Pete Townshend playing acoustic guitar behind plastic baffles and Roger Daltrey storming off stage with a dodgy voice. It's generally considered the group's *annus horribilis* and not surprisingly is given short shrift in this expansive 370-page hardback, comprised of eyewitness accounts of The Who's 60-plus years on stage.

They're a refreshingly mixed bunch, your Who fans. From the youthful innocence and provincial ballrooms and hotel function rooms of the High Numbers era ("The girls were wonderful and the music superb") through chart success ("The town council banned them from appearing in Bishop's Stortford again") to America ("There were no monitors. No microphones for the stacks of speakers and drums") to earning the accolade "The greatest live rock 'n' roll band in the world" in the early '70s ("The Who demanded a top of the range bottle of brandy, which would have cost more than two weeks of my student grant money"), the memories are as disparate as the individuals. Crucially, the fans' love and respect (and occasional tinnitus) is palpable.

Personal photographs, autographs, tickets and local newspaper cuttings provide rich visual accompaniment, as well as a vivid snapshot of the street fashions of the day; from immaculately presented mods to whiskers and double denim. Essential for fans.

Andy Morten

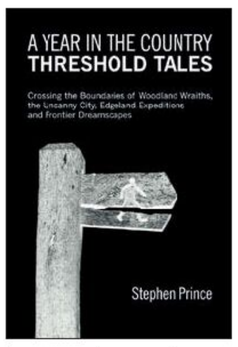
LISTEN TO THE
SHINDIG!
BROADCAST
ON MIXCLOUD

A YEAR IN THE COUNTRY: THRESHOLD TALES

Stephen Prince

★★★★★

A YEAR IN THE COUNTRY



A new edition of Stephen Prince's *A Year in the Country* series generates a small frisson of delight. And this year we have been spoilt with not one, but two publications as Prince continues his hauntological deep dive into the "otherly pastoral", investigating the uncanny links between nature, the land and the urban world. Centred on the wyrd, Prince pulls from art, music and literature in his attempt to define this magical and intriguing universe. *A Year in the Country: Threshold Tales* adopts a different approach to previous outings with Prince describing his personal journey across the "psychic borderlands" of film – cinematic episodes in which boundaries between past and future are blurred.

These are tales of isolation, claustrophobia, the occult (in its truest meaning) – across habitats and continents. Prince covers the world of hidden dread in his discussion of the Finnish shape-shifting folk-horror *The White Reindeer*, Disney's version of Ray Bradbury's otherworldly *Something Wicked This Way Comes* and the more contemporary media-inflected tale of *Nadja And Vampir-Cuadecuc*. In juxtaposing land and city, the overarching themes appear nevertheless starkly analogous. The haunting claustrophobia of the landscape of *Without Name* sits alongside the municipal nightmare of *Dark Tower*, while Jim Jarmusch's *Ghost Dog* deftly blends ancient Japanese culture with modern day LA. Having discussed southern Gothic within the context of Mike Hodges' *Black Rainbow*, the book ends with the fascinating tale of country singer Jim White as he traverses the Deep South laden with a statue of Jesus. Another great contribution to the *A Year in The Country* canon.

Sarah Gregory

Faten Kanaan, Bitchin Bajas and Rose City Band light up Le Guess Who?
PHOTOS: CAMILLA AISA

LE GUESS WHO?
Utrecht, Netherlands
THURSDAY 9TH TO SUNDAY 12TH NOVEMBER

Those of us who've made Le Guess Who? an annual tradition tend to talk about it a lot. We tend to sound like members of a cult looking for new recruits, too. But there are motivations behind a devotion like this. Le Guess Who? is the festival that better caters to true music heads' multifarious tastes. This year, we moved from the electric benju-fuelled sounds of Pakistani master Ustad Noor Bakhsh to Richard Dawson's electric wyrd-folk stories to post-punks FACS' decay-embracing noise, all in one day.

On another memorable day we witness Faten Kanaan making contact with higher forces through synth loops, indulge in deep meditation with Natural Information Society and dance to the vibey, Dead-shrouded country of Rose City Band before falling into a Moog-powered, space-scouting trance courtesy of Bitchin Bajas.

As remarkably varied as they are, Le Guess Who? acts do have something crucial in common. They see making music, and sharing it, not as routine or display, but as a lifeline. The audience, among the most open-minded you'll find at a western festival, feels the same way. Music makes us better. It prompts us to get out of our bubble – finding, in return, Egypt's Le Cri du Caire blending poetry and freeform sound, Senegal's Ndox Electrique turning rituals of possession into galvanising rock, Japan's Maya Ongaku aiming straight to the soul with hazy ambient psych.

Music brings together talent and life experience (the debut of The Harvest Time Project, a heartfelt tribute to Pharoah Sanders) and sets our priorities straight (there's a rock star-worthy queue waiting for Brìghde Chaimbeul's Scottish small pipes). Music itself should be the priority more often, and Le Guess Who? walks the talk with The Anonymous Project, a new format that has mysterious performers playing inside a cube covered by projections – we start making our bets the day after (was one of the players Cate Le Bon? Was another Laraaji?), knowing that the pure experience of it is what matters.

All-time faves (like Stereolab, in fine form on closing night, or Zamrock stars WITCH) are even more enjoyable after the enrichment of new discoveries (like forward-thinking *avant-garde* jazz player Nala Sinephro). As they make an imposing medieval church (just one of Utrecht's stunning locations) feel like a cosy room packed with friends, Joanna Sternberg jokes that theirs ("Don't you dare feel like you are alone") are just cheesy songs. They're not, you can see everyone thinking. They are exactly what many of us floundering through these times need. So excuse us for sounding like members of a cult. Once again, Le Guess Who? had us looking around and feeling that our species was a little less hopeless than we thought. That's no small thing.

Camilla Aisa

"Le Guess Who? acts do have something crucial in common. They see making music, and sharing it, not as routine or display, but as a lifeline"

THE MANFREDS
Glasgow Royal Concert Hall
THURSDAY 19TH OCTOBER

The Manfreds' 60th anniversary Maximum R&B tour rolls into town with a feast of hits spread across two generously proportioned sets including an acoustic interlude. Fronted by the evergreen Paul Jones with a little help from old friends Mike D'Abo and Tom McGuiness, The Manfreds treat the crowd to a pretty much all-inclusive Manfred Mann '60s spectacular and more. It's easy to forget just how ubiquitous Manfred Mann were during their '60s heyday, but here the hits come thick and fast from the opening '5-4-3-2-1' onwards in what feels like a non-stop bonanza of chart action.

Paul Jones' vocals, harmonica playing and affable frontman persona remain remarkably untouched by the passing of the decades, with his blues credentials showcased to great effect on a spirited trek through Howlin' Wolf's 'Smokestack Lightning'. While Jones might be the show's focal point this is a collaborative effort at heart with Mike D'Abo taking the lead on those songs dating from his time as Manfred Mann's lead vocalist and his big-selling solo composition 'Handbags And Gladrags', while Tom McGuiness chips in with the McGuiness Flint favourites 'Malt And Barley Blues' and 'When I'm Dead And Gone'. And those hits keep on coming right to the very end with the show-closing double act of The Mighty Quinn' and 'Do Wah Diddy Diddy' providing the perfect singalong finale.

Grahame Bent

BONNACONS OF DOOM
Moor Beer Vaults, London
THURSDAY 26TH OCTOBER

BOD take the stage, dressed all in black and trademark mirror-dish masks, and start to generate windswept drones from which the minimalist Phrygian riffery of 'Esus' emerges, heralding the arrival of cloaked singer Kate Smith, her ecstatic ululations spiralling round the vault, triggering spontaneous outbursts of hand-dancing at the front of tonight's capacity crowd.

Last time these Liverpudlians played London, it was six months ago, as support to PIGS x7. Tonight they headline, launching new album *Signs* and rise to the occasion, moving into the fuzzed-up octave leaping bassline of 'Limina', like 'Careful With That Axe Eugene' crashing The Misunderstood's 'I Unseen' riff deep in the underworld.

Kate's compelling high-priestess presence holds the audience captive from the get-go, whirling with arms aloft to summon the words and notes she needs to cut through and soar over the great yammering trance-portations of the band, like a more operatic Grace Slick on Great Society's 'Free Advice' but also capable of swooping way down low when the songs require.

And these *are* songs; perhaps belying their name somewhat, Bonnacons Of Doom are not content to merely bludgeon you with monolithic slabs of volume, but are also masters of dynamics too, they know exactly when to come up for air, breaking through into quieter passages, before taking further deep dives on songs like electronic slow-burn devotional 'Semaphore', desert-disco stomper 'Facing', the ancient funeral-barge keening of 'Argenta' and blues-riffing end song 'Plantae'. Fantastic stuff that bodes very well for both the new album and the band.

Stephen Wood

Stereolab's Lætitia Sadier
PHOTO: JEFF PITCHER

The Manfreds' Paul Jones

Jim Jones (left) and his All Stars
PHOTO: JEFF PITCHER

STEREOLAB / MEMORIALS
Black Box, Hastings
THURSDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2023

Outside the world is a wasteland of near-relentless misery and strife. Inside this intimate, blackened room up a staircase mere yards from Hastings seafront on a soggy, sodden autumn evening, Stereolab transport a couple of hundred middle-aged souls back to their own planet.

A warm-up to a very short UK tour, 'Come Andy', 'Supah Jainito' and 'Eye Of The Volcano' make for the most magnificent opening quarter of an hour of any gig I can ever recall. Eyes dart for the next 90 minutes from Tim Gane's mesmeric head ballet stage left to Laetitia in Gallic stripes stage right via overhead psychedelic projections and to the studious yet dazzling brilliance of their cohorts Andy Ramsay, Xavier Muñoz Guimera and Joseph Watson, on drum, bass and keys.

Stereolab's music still sounds like it signposts an optimistic future even though that future was already a decade or two gone by the time they first took flight 30 years ago. As a prelude to the aural treats that laid in wait, the duo Memorials' (Verity Susman of Electrelane and Wire's Matthew Simms) short set of drones, grooves and ethereal doodlings on synth, drums, sax, finger bells and keys, like The Soundcarriers at Berberian Sound Studio, provide a perfect and very enjoyable aperitif.

Vic Templar

THE JIM JONES ALL STARS
The 100 Club, London
FRIDAY 10TH NOVEMBER

They erupt onstage with a rapid-fire burst of full-on ramalama rave-up, then crunch straight into sleazy grind-stomp 'Cement Mixer' all eight of them masters (and mistress) of the ram jam soul ceremonial, a heady mix of twin-guitar, twin-sax, keys, bass, drums, maracas and backing vocals moving as one in thrall to its gigantic three-note riff.

Presiding over proceedings is full-throated hollering 'n' testifying master of ceremonies Jim Jones himself, on this, their 18th consecutive show – rumour has it everybody's been eschewing excessive alcohol consumption, choosing instead to get high on their own supply of new material like "Give Me The Grease" (a studio-catchphrase coined while recording current album *Ain't No Peril* at Memphis Magnetic), its rusty-pendulum guitar-riffing to and fro, the single *Batman*-chord vamp and horn stabs of 'You Got The Best Stink (I Ever Stunk)', old songs like Thee Hypnotics' 'Shakedown' featuring *Funhouse*-era saxophone squalls, and further back and beyond, cover versions of 'Run Run Run' amplifying the original's boogie element with barrelhouse piano, 'Everybody's Got Something To Hide...' at breakneck junglist precision speed, Mose Allison and Little Richard songs, all is grist to their mill – this band mutates everything in their 20-plus-song set until each becomes a gritty, greasy condensation of everything you've ever loved about music.

We leave The 100 Club and spill out onto Oxford Street, our faith in rock 'n' roll re-affirmed; tonight The Jim Jones All Stars were the only game in town, and will be every time and everywhere they play.

Stephen Wood

DREAM PHASES
The Cavendish Arms, London
FRIDAY 17TH NOVEMBER

Los Angeles' Dream Phases return to the UK for the first time since the pandemic for nine shows, with Syd Arthur pal Josh Magill and Apollo Ray appearing at various dates. This marked their second from last show, with Apollo Ray opening, and showing that music still has new directions to travel. Dream Phases typify the LA scene with long hair, vintage slacks and an open approach to psychedelia, borrowing liberally from the past 55 years of forward-thinking bands. Sadly, they only played for 30 minutes due to the promoter shoehorning another two unrelated bands in, but for that half-hour they were on fire.

In the absence of keyboard player Phil Cobb, Brandon Graham and Keveen Baudouin fill the space with effect-laden guitars recalling My Bloody Valentine and Ride before returning to mellow, sundazed LA pop melodies that traverse The Beach Boys, Rain Parade and Beachwood Sparks. Rhythm section Shane Graham and Myles Wong provide a solid bedrock, always bringing the trippy excursions back to base in a timely manner. B-side 'Tandy' is sublime, and it's always good to hear a Tom Petty cover, in this case 'Hung Up And Overdue'. A short but sweet set.

Dream Phases forge a unique sound that add Beatleisms aplenty to the desert heat stylings of contemporaries such as Allah-Las, offering a nice twist on the reverb and jangle format. Catch them.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills

THE NEW EVES
YES Basement, Manchester
SATURDAY 25TH NOVEMBER

We catch The New Eves as part of a stacked line-up from Manchester's Mood Swings night, on one of the final nights of their recent UK tour. This year has been big for the band – they've released their first EP (Original Sin / Mother, from Broadside Hacks and Slow Dance Recordings) and there is a keen fanbase emerging, evident in the sold-out T-shirts at the merch stand. So when the band starts, with a low drone of intentional-sounding feedback, it's safe to say expectations are high.

Although the actual set up is minimalist to begin with – a stand-up drum kit, guitar, bass and cello – this grows and develops as the set continues, with a violin, tiny accordion and flute all making appearances in an expertly crafted performance. Spooky, jumpy strings and yelped vocals evoke influences ranging from Patti Smith to Paul Giovanni's *Wicker Man* soundtrack. There are clear links to similarly fluid folk/post-punk ensembles, such as caroline and Tara Clerkin Trio, a scene that's been gaining traction for some time. However, the mystical, inherently female lyricism on songs like 'Highway Man' sets The New Eves apart and draws us into a world of pastoral landscapes and love spells performed in teenage bedrooms.

The audience sways and bops around a bit to the faster songs, but mostly stands transfixed. There's a strong folk-horror vibe from the flowing white gowns and choral three-part harmonies, despite the fact we've wandered downstairs from a multi-storied student bar selling pizza and vegan kebabs. Nonetheless, throbbing bass lines and psych-led guitar freak-outs root the performance in what the girls term "hagstone rock", echoing predecessors like The Fates and The Raincoats.

As the cello fades on their final song, the crowd awake from the spell. But the sound of the New Eves feels so fresh and captivating that it's hard for anyone to walk away not wanting more.

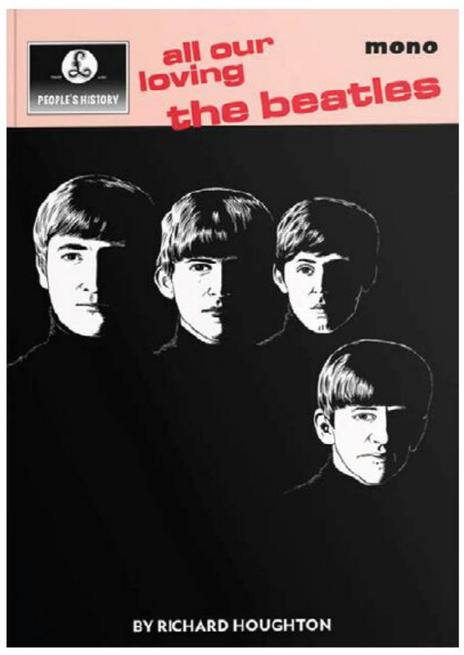
Gloria Coles

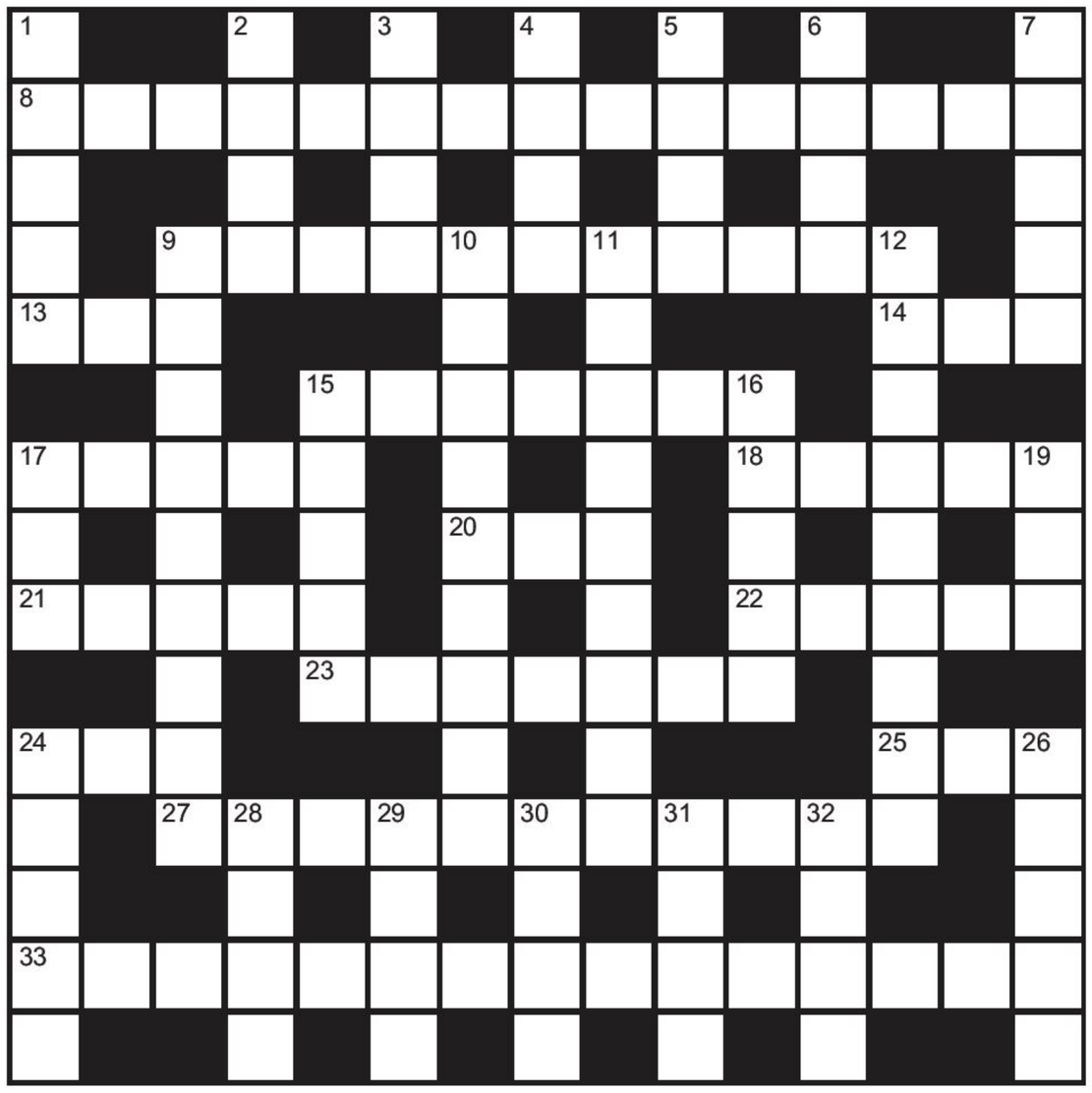
Prize Crossword

by Stuart Draper

We're in a Fabs state of mind here at *Shindig!* Having immersed ourselves in the *Red* and *Blue* album reboots and scratched our heads while listening to 'Now And Then', the arrival of Richard Houghton's ***ALL OUR LOVING: THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE BEATLES*** – an illustrated 270-page hardback chonicling the years that shook the world via over 500 eyewitness accounts – is timely to say the least. And we have a copy to give away.

To enter, simply send your completed crossword to *Shindig!* #147 Crossword, 40 Windsor Crescent, Frome, Somerset BA11 2EA or email a legible scan of it to win@shindig-magazine.com with the words "S! #147 crossword competition" in the subject line, no later than 1st February. And don't forget to include your name and address!





Across

8 Use things at once, at odds with The Herd's bright dwelling (8,7)
9 Headless Roman emperor has self-worth, this Bernie Schwartz pseudonym was an Everlys production (6,5)
13 Half-riches show who's a reptile in the eyes of The Soft Boys (3)
14 Happy climax of Tim Buckley is some disadvantage (3)
15 It oddly isn't now inside the brothers, if you get their drift (7)
17 Renewal shows the end of Thomas, who has recent history (5)
18 Oh, were you the drummer for Teenage Fanclub? (5)
20 Bring your extra starter, this requires repeating inside The Blackbirds (3)
21 Revolutionary type holds force as Pat Thomas spans continental boundaries (5)
22 Un-fit festival, refit remainder for The Antellects' love companion (5)
23 Foolishly fall to pieces once float is removed, The Sonic Dawn's third puts everything in the shade (7)
24 The world outside begins and ends second Spooky Tooth album (3)
25 Lala follows these out-of-hours leaders for Faces (3)
27 Extraordinarily bigger Karen, an air force marshal and cooker of spice (6,5)
33 Part two mixed with the allergic for Lindisfarne (5,5,5)

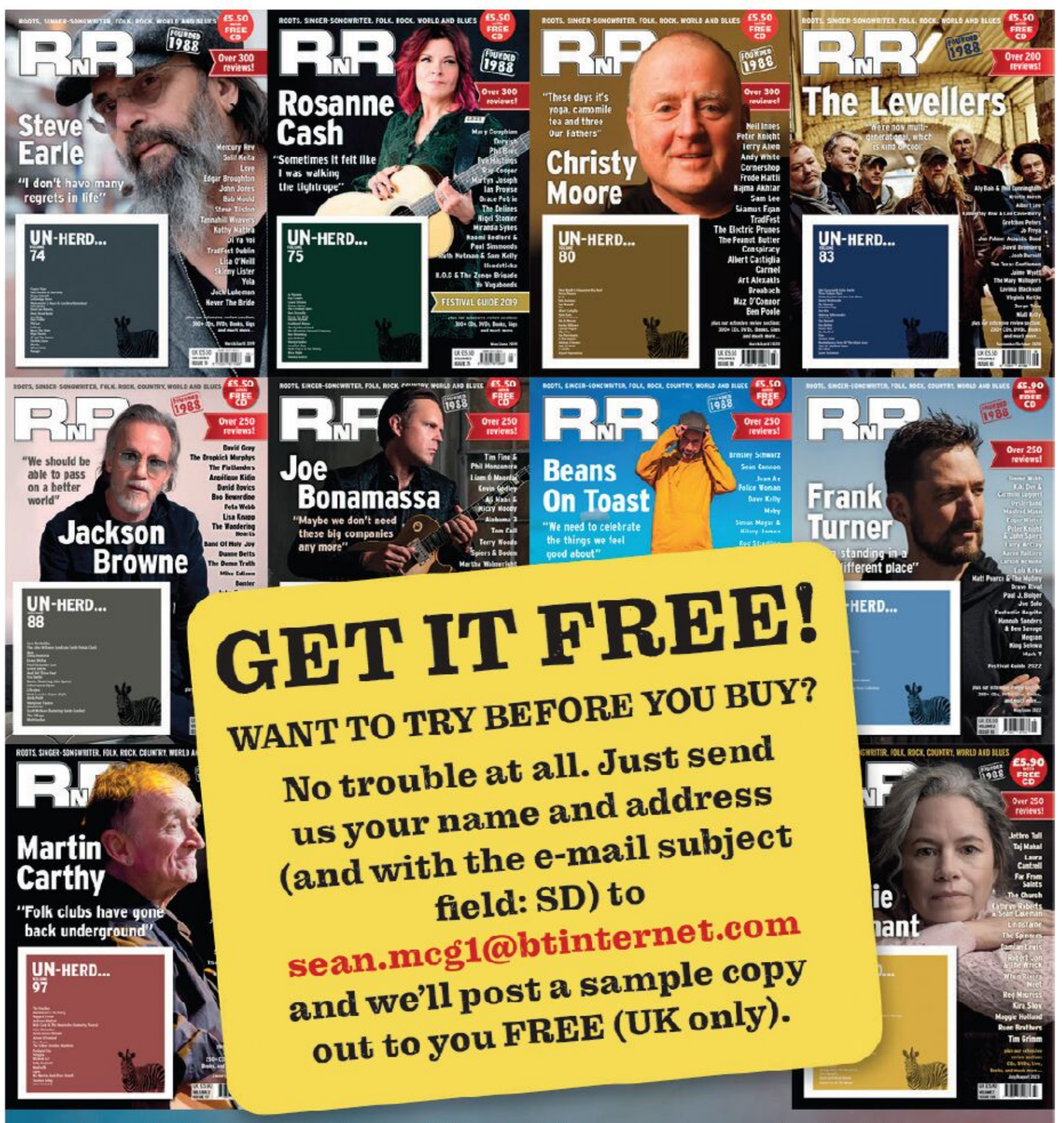
Down

1 The first word on the cover of our earlier issues? Perhaps so - you can't hide this beginnings (5)
2 We amusedly trim the ends to know Jethro Tull (4)
3 Georgie Fame's brief and somewhat ignominious affair from 1967 (4)
4 Glad add weird name to say what you begin with (4)
5 In the absence of realism, formularise founds Fabienne Delsol's latest (4)
6 Riveting collaboration from Taste and Blossom Toes members, largely found in studio (4)
7 Badly wired close to Grapefruit's 100th (5)
9 In error, Procol Harum sadly got a overseasoned frankfurter (1,5,3)
10 Serge Gainsbourg soundtrack meets The Fugs before Avenue A on Dump stomper (9)
11 Intellectual property heads with beaten-up upbeats at the Basildon drinking house of John Pantry (6,3)
12 Carl Oates confused Sam Gopal on a moving debut (9)
15 We bookend a smash to find how Big Star's life is supposed to end (5)
16 I inquire within - what do you call that XTC podcast eventually? (5)
17 The Incredible String Band's fourth takes a chunk of the week to get going (3)
19 Early evening sees Adams other create metal bird (3)
24 No lie, literacy repeats for primitive Coventry singer (5)
26 Small Faces finish off yoghurts, every little bit! (5)
28 Resented leaves disheartened despite a dream start for Paul Revere & The Raiders (1,3)
29 Br,n's John initially got your wish now (4)
30 Training content fills the parade to make Paisley Underground alumni (4)
31 Faulty 4 Down could commence corner (4)
32 Way out times for Ramirez Exposure hold some complexity (4)

Name

Address

Phone **Email**



Issue 146 crossword solution

1 S	I	N	G	2 A	S	I	3 M	P	L	4 E	S	O	N	5 G
H	■	■	■	L	■	■	O	■	■	A	■	■	■	H
6 E	L	7 L	I	S	■	8 L	O	9 G	■	10 R	H	11 I	N	O
L	■	U	■	12 O	R	I	G	I	N	S	■	D	■	S
A	■	D	■	■	■	O	■	F	■	■	■	E	■	T
13 G	I	O	14 V	A	15 N	N	16 I	T	17 O	M	18 M	A	S	O
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19 M	E	A	N	■	20 M	I	L	N	E	■	21 D	O	I	T
C	■	■	O	■	A	■	A	■	L	■	A	■	■	H
22 D	O	23 O	M	S	D	24 A	Y	25 P	L	U	S	26 O	N	E
O	■	H	■	■	■	B	■	O	■	■	■	P	■	M
N	■	I	■	27 A	T	L	28 A	N	T	29 A	■	U	■	O
30 A	B	O	M	B	■	31 E	N	D	■	32 M	R	S	U	N
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33 D	A	V	I	D	M	C	W	I	L	L	I	A	M	S

TRAIL WEST

MARCH

FRI 29TH CARLISLE OLD FIRE STATION
SAT 30TH LONDON 100 CLUB
SUN 31ST NEWCASTLE THE CLUNY

HUGH CORNWELL

JANUARY 2024

17 BURY ST EDMUNDS THE APEX
18 NEWCASTLE BOILER SHOP
19 GLASGOW QMU
20 HOLMFIRTH PICTUREDROME
24 BRIGHTON CONCORDE
25 ISLINGTON ASSEMBLY HALL
26 LEAMINGTON ASSEMBLY
27 FROME CHEESE & GRAIN

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04.05 GATESHEAD SAGE
05.05 LEEDS BRUDENELL
10.05 BURY ST EDMUNDS APEX
11.05 BIRMINGHAM ASYLUM
17.05 CARDIFF TRAMSHED
18.05 NEWBURY ARLINGTON ARTS
19.05 EXETER PHOENIX
24.05 SOUTHAMPTON 1865
25.05 LONDON DINGWALLS
31.05 GLASGOW ÒRAN MÓR
01.06 ABERDEEN LEMON TREE

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SOUTHAMPTON TURNER SIMS 6TH APRIL
EASTBOURNE ROYAL HIPPODROME 11TH APRIL
BURY ST EDMUNDS THE APEX 12TH APRIL
SUNDERLAND FIRE STATION 13TH APRIL
18TH APRIL LYTHAM LOWTHER PAVILION
19TH APRIL CORBY CORE AT THE CUBE
20TH APRIL STOCKTON ARC
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26TH APRIL NORTHWICH MEMORIAL HALL
27TH APRIL COVENTRY HMV EMPIRE

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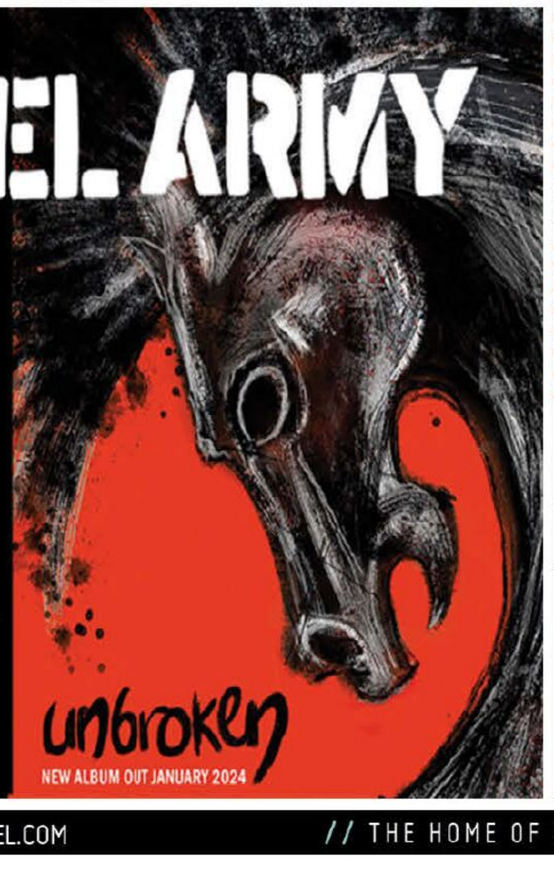
PHOTO CREDIT LAWRENCE WATSON

NEW MODEL ARMY

APRIL 2024

21 NEWCASTLE BOILER SHOP
23 CAMBRIDGE THE JUNCTION
26 WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN AT THE HALLS
27 LEEDS O2 ACADEMY



Kevin Ayers

The Confessions Of Dr Dream And Other Stories

ISLAND, UK, 1974

DESIGN CONCEPT BY GROUP FIVE, ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES WEDGE AND GEORGE SMITH

CHRIS GROOM peers behind the masks the tall, tousle-haired angelic hippy with the disconcertingly deep voice and the cosmically-cryptic song titles

Each new body of work from Kevin Ayers was greeted with great delight by those in the know, aficionados of the early Canterbury Scene, Soft Machinists and Patto fans alike. Nineteen seventy-four's *The Confessions Of Dr Dream And Other Stories* was no exception, a slightly weightier production both musically and lyrically than before, complete with tantalising tracks like 'Everybody's Sometime And Some People's All The Time Blues' and a host of freaky friends from new pal Ollie Halsall to old bandmate Mike Oldfield dropping by to add a guitar lick or two to the psychedelic pot.

After four quirky and experimental albums for Harvest, the move to Chris Blackwell's Island label produced one of Ayers' more accessible collections, with the titular 'Other Stories' covering side one, while Side Two housed the four-part 'Dr Dream' concept, 18 often nightmarish minutes of acoustic beauty, spooky effects and dark, foreboding riffs – "Ayers' most formidable recorded work to date," according to *NME*'s Nick Kent. The album arrived wearing a cooler than average jacket, bearing all the hallmarks of photographer/illustrator James Wedge, with assistance from George Smith and the Group Five design team.

Set against a black background, the starkly elegant white shapes of the couple hold up coloured Venetian masque-like faces, each one morphing from angry red, via jealous green to happy normality as they meet in the middle. Wedge's artful fashion photography often featured the solarisation and "rayograph" techniques pioneered by the Surrealist photographer Man Ray and his favoured combination of black & white with subtle areas of hand-tinted colour is evident in both sides of Ayers' album sleeve.

"Wedge turned to fashion photography and continued to produce his playfully erotic images for print media and fashion houses – the famous Biba nude poster amongst them"

Strangely, Wedge didn't start out as a photographer. After a spell painting at Walthamstow Art School, he specialised in millinery at The Royal College Of Art and opened two clothing boutiques, Countdown and Top Gear, on King's Road in Chelsea in partnership with his model girlfriend Pat Booth. As well as an outlet for Wedge's extravagant headgear, Countdown also stocked Booth's carefully chosen clobber, even selling Mick Jagger the white dress famously worn at the Stone's '69 Hyde Park gig. Encouraged by the glamorous lifestyles of his friends David Bailey and Terrance Donovan, by '70 Wedge had turned to fashion photography and continued to produce his playfully erotic images for print media and fashion houses – the famous Biba nude poster amongst them – for the next 30 years.

The clever use of masks here is somewhat appropriate for a musician who tended to shy away from the limelight. Whenever anything approaching success came his way, Ayers would slip silently out of the spotlight and leave. Following a Soft Machine tour with Jimi Hendrix, Ayers decided he was effectively a pop singer fronting a jazz band and quit, selling his bass to Noel Redding and fleeing to Ibiza. When Island later tried to put him in a "supergroup" with John Cale, Nico and Brian Eno, after one album and a brief fling with Cale's wife, our Kevin freaked out once again and disappeared to live the bohemian life in Spain and the south of France.

Stardom was simply not Ayers' style. As he told *The Guardian* in 2003. "My real records have always been messy things, but the industry doesn't like this. Nearly all best-selling albums have a consistent sound to make them easy to position and market. Well, I tried, but my heart was never in it. I think you have to have a bit missing upstairs, or just be hungry for fame and money, to play the industry game. I'm not very good at it." S!

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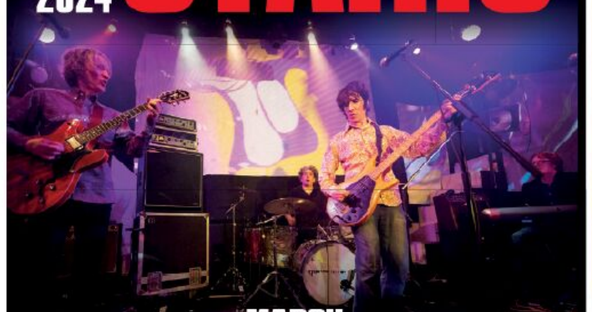

MARCH
THU 21 MANCHESTER ACADEMY 3
FRI 22 LONDON O2 ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
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vinyl clicks

In which **MICHAEL BJÖRN** investigates worthy albums that have somehow eluded reissue, compilation or acclaim

STEVE TILSTON
Collection
(Transatlantic, UK 1972)

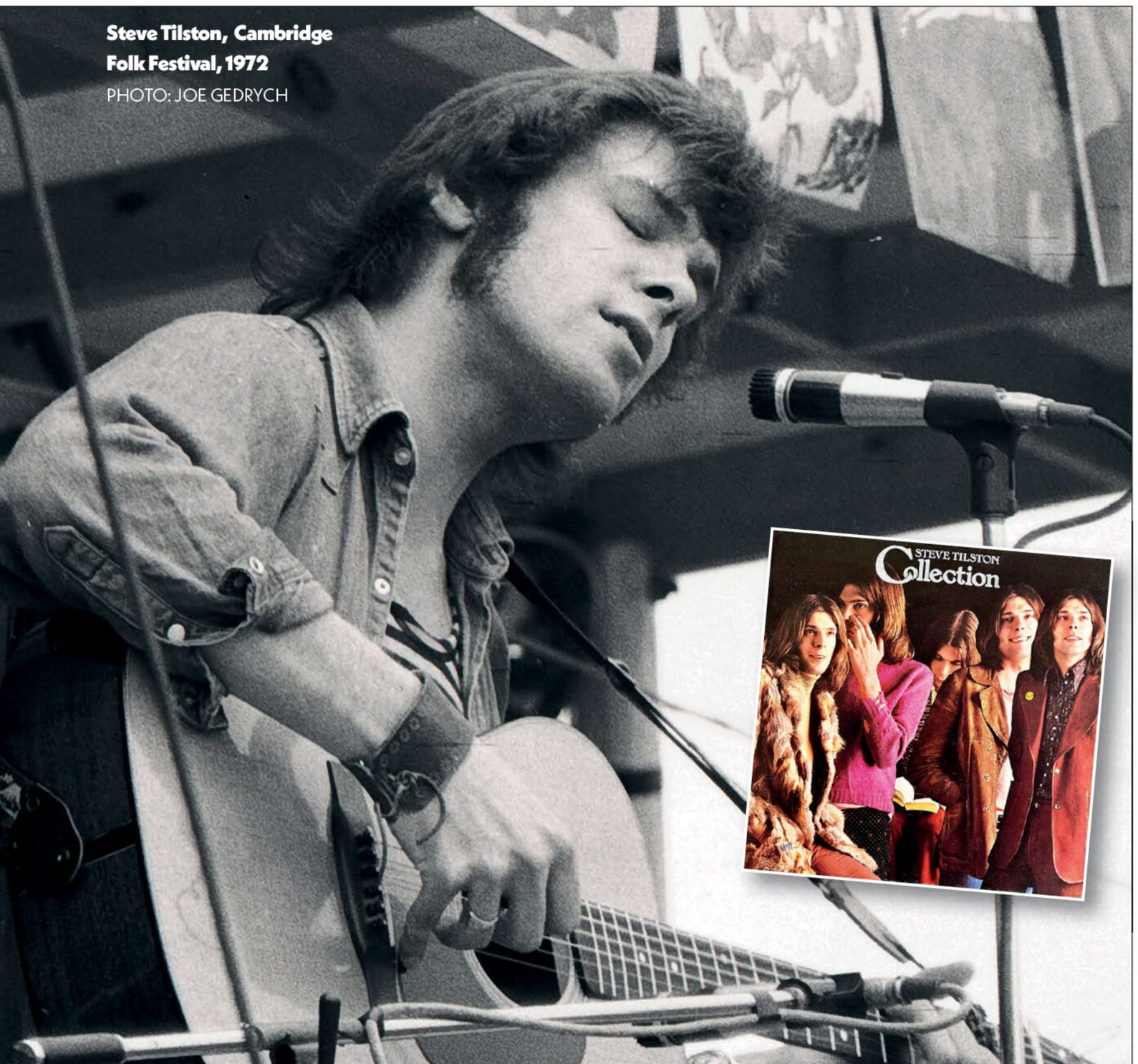
Can a difficult second album make you want to disappear? Despite a nice feature in *Melody Maker*, Steve Tilston felt so bad about his – *Collection* – that he left London. But this flawed sophomore album is better than its maker and attendant rumours might have you believe.

After his acclaimed debut on Village Thing, there were some differences of opinion with label owner Ian A Anderson. I was courted by quite a few record labels," remembers Steve who decided to sign with Transatlantic. The circles I was moving in were quite rocky," explains Steve, who at the time was sharing a flat in North London's Crouch End with Hamish Stuart of Dream Police. He also brought in bassist Rick Kemp, whom he knew from playing with Michael Chapman, but the others he only met in the studio. Everybody got on very well," remembers Steve. Sam Charters, who had produced Country Joe & The Fish but for political reasons then had settled in Stockholm, would produce. Sam had recently also learned arrangements. "He wanted somebody to test his arrangements out on. I was that guinea pig, and I didn't realise it," says Steve. But when he heard Sam's arrangement of 'All In A Dream' he balked. "Sam paired that one back, but the quid pro quo was that he would leave all the horns on 'Don't Let It Get You Down."

Still, Transatlantic owner Nat Joseph would repeatedly exclaim how great the album sounded, and a deal with MCA had been secured for the USA. A&R executive Artie Mogull, who'd discovered Bob Dylan among many others, was equally enthusiastic. Album's gonna be a million seller," he told Steve. Aged 21 and high on the praise, Steve decided that singing in a mid-Atlantic accent was probably a good idea.

But when he saw the album cover, with himself exhibiting a clothes collection, almost fashion model style, reality caught up with him. "The clothes with the holes in were the only ones I owned," explains Steve, who tried to stop the release, to no avail. Steve hurriedly went fishing with friends in Cornwall and then relocated to Bristol. "It was cringey. The folk fraternity didn't love it," says Steve who was still making his living on the folk circuit. The label was unhappy, and Nat Joseph called him for a meeting. "It was like being summoned to the headmaster's office. 'Are you taking your career seriously? Why are you moving to Bristol?'"

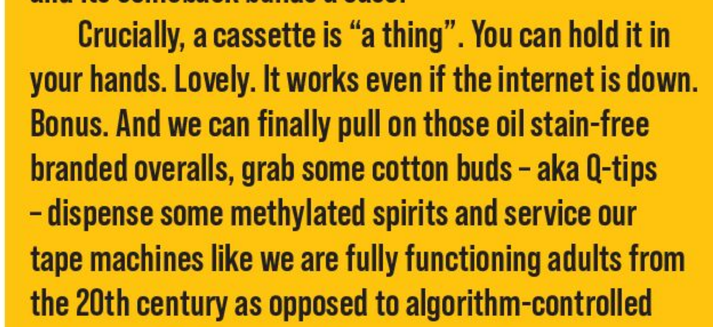
But underneath the failed attempt at making Tilston a star hides a solid album. Some of the songs are pretty good," says Steve. "'Reaching Out' is my favourite and I still do that one, although it's hard reaching the high notes." 'City Life' and 'One Man Band' are other highlights. Although available for streaming, *Collection* has never seen a proper reissue.



Steve Tilston, Cambridge Folk Festival, 1972
PHOTO: JOE GEDRYCH

audio heaven

MURDO MATHEWSON goes back to the future



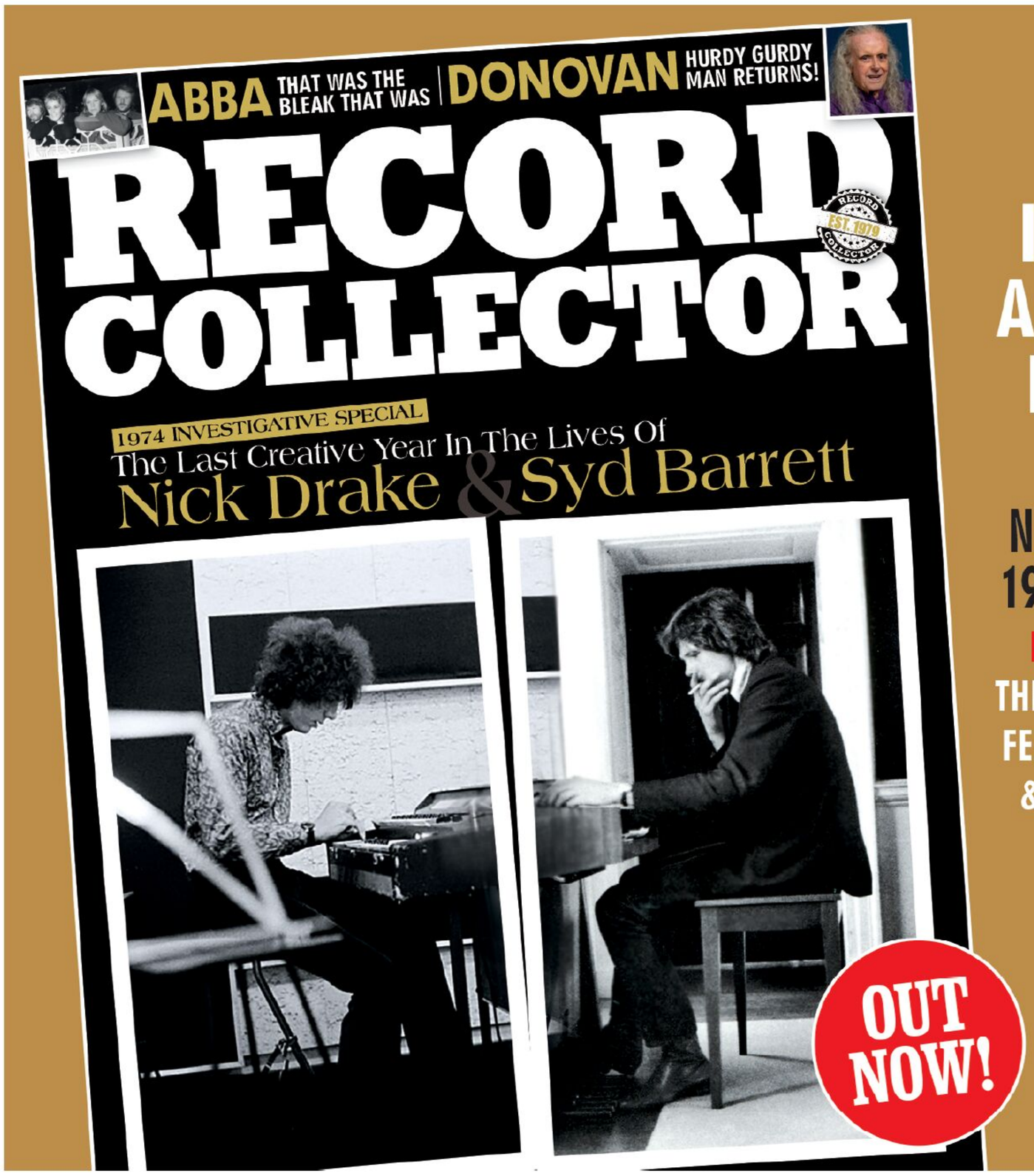
RE-REWIND
2024: The year of the cassette?

Having performed CPR on the near-flatlining vinyl format – with magnificent results, including thoroughly healthy sales figures – the long arm of nostalgia has chosen the "Compact Cassette" for a pumpin' dose of *Stayin' Alive*. Those of an older vintage may spit out their tea at word of a return of the *somewhat* high-maintenance cassette. But look beyond the format's need to intermittently vomit its magnetic tape into the innards of your cassette player, its often "hissy fit"-esque sound quality and its penchant for taking the slowest possible route when you want to skip tracks and its comeback builds a case.

Crucially, a cassette is "a thing". You can hold it in your hands. Lovely. It works even if the internet is down. Bonus. And we can finally pull on those oil stain-free branded overalls, grab some cotton buds – aka Q-tips – dispense some methylated spirits and service our tape machines like we are fully functioning adults from the 20th century as opposed to algorithm-controlled orderers of Deliveroo and loungewear sets.

But absolutely best of all, arm yourself with a cassette deck with a record function, a blank cassette, and an audio source – think CD player or smartphone or turntable – and you can make a MIXTAPE! Mmm, mixtape. See, the mention of a mixtape makes even the sternest of cassette sceptics come over all misty-eyed. And we are not talking about a digital playlist that you can remake at a screen swipe; pop the holes in your recorded cassette, and you have a personally curated selection of beloved music cuts committed to magnetic tape for eternity*. (* At least until you Sellotape over the holes to record version #2.)

Where do you begin on the retail road to cassette nirvana? An elderly relative's attic is a good start. Failing that, folks with analogue *nous* can hit eBay, while those with a Green Cross Code disposition could visit a reputable dealer of second-hand decks. If brand new is your schtick, the TEAC W-1200 is in UK stores now and features a twin deck and USB out. For those on the go, French maker We Are Rewind recently launched a portable player with an audio input and Bluetooth. Re-bonjour la cassette!



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